

Scott Act agitation. Is it possible that the heads of the Church can have considered the provisions of the Act which we have mentioned, and that they can regard them as consistent with Christianity? Consistent with Christianity they cannot be if they are not consistent with the laws of justice and affection.

THERE is no limit to delusions or to the freaks of opinion, otherwise it would seem incredible that a great effect should be produced, as we are assured it is, in the Scott Act controversy by the amazing theory that the wine of Scripture was unfermented. It is surely a remarkable thing that this notable discovery should have been hidden from the eyes of all the learned men who have been engaged for so many centuries in the interpretation of the Scriptures, and revealed only when it was required to cover a weak point in the argument for the Scott Act. Very weak no doubt the point is, and pressing was the necessity of covering it. If Christ not only drank wine himself but has provided that it shall be drunk for ever by making it a part of a sacred ordinance, the Christians who denounce wine as poison and the use of it as sin cannot help finding themselves in an awkward dilemma. But no independent scholar will endorse or even treat with respect the novel hypothesis by which an escape from the dilemma is sought. The word always used in the New Testament is *oinos*: the same word is used by all the Greek writers and means invariably fermented wine: while the cognate word *vinum* in Latin everywhere bears the same meaning. Does anybody suppose that when the Pharisees charged our Lord with being a winebibber they meant that he drank only the unfermented juice of the grape? Is that the point of the contrast between John who came not drinking wine and Jesus who came drinking it? The wine into which the water was turned at the marriage feast, the wine upon which, when used in the Agape, some of the Corinthians got drunk, the wine of which St. Paul advised his friend to take a little for his stomach's sake, the wine which with oil the Good Samaritan poured into the wounds of the man who had fallen among thieves, the wine which when put new into old bottles would burst them—does anybody believe that this was unfermented? Would such a fancy ever have entered anybody's head if there had not been a cause to plead, and a cause which required a good deal of pleading? Canon Farrar is strong for Total Abstinence and at the same time a learned divine: let him be asked whether he holds that the wine of Scripture was unfermented.

Now it is the *Hamilton Spectator* that thinks fit in its treatment of THE WEEK to set at naught the rules and courtesies of the press. Considering that the *Spectator* has been charging half the public men of Canada with furnishing arms to rebellion, and has been disclaimed by the leaders of its party, its accusations are not of much importance. It is at liberty to call us an organ of Annexationism or anything else that it chooses. It is itself the organ of the Protectionist Manufacturers; and we would recommend those gentlemen, if they wish their interests to be well served, not to patronize scurrility and breaches of the press law, which will only make them enemies, and enemies who when the time comes may strike home. Let the *Hamilton Spectator* attack our editorials as much as it pleases and hit as hard as it can, though it will find the gentlemanly mode of hitting quite as telling as the opposite mode. There can be no justification or excuse for personal attacks upon contributors. As in the case of the *Montreal Herald*, so in the case of the *Hamilton Spectator*, contempt of press law is self-outlawry, and all who are connected with the offending journal must be prepared to take the consequences.

THE prospect of war with Russia has been a revelation to Great Britain and to all whose destinies are involved in hers. The realities of a naval conflict, as the editor of the *Fortnightly* says, have been at length recognized, and it is beginning to be understood how evil the case of England might be were her ocean routes interrupted, her trade dislocated and her Empire exposed to the ravages of an enemy's cruisers. Everything has been filled with a convulsion of hurried and anxious preparation, though the threat of danger came only from a third-rate naval power. "We have talked," proceeds the editor of the *Fortnightly*, "about the potential greatness of our Colonial Empire, but the first breath of war lays its weakness bare. The remedy for this weakness, it is consoling to feel, rests with ourselves. We must build, fortify and consolidate. It is perceived that Russia has the choice of many objectives, and that the scene of her exploits may be laid in many a distant corner of the world. A maritime conflict could not be localized, and the only plan is to meet cruiser with cruiser, and to hold as many coaling stations and forts in distant seas as possible. Certainly the activity in our dockyards and arsenals is remarkable, and to some extent spasmodic. The danger is that, if the Russian scare passes

away, a relapse may come. Let England take the lesson to heart and meditate upon it. We are now almost for the first time in our history beginning to realize what the cost of Empire means, and the cost must be paid, if the Empire is to be kept." This is a magnanimous resolution; but will it be carried into effect? Will an industrial and commercial nation consent to bear the inordinate burden of taxation which such a policy entails? Will there not be an exodus like that which is produced, to the dismay of Bismarck, by the military system in Germany? A despotism or a strong aristocracy can of course persist, as Louis XIV. or the Tory aristocracy of England in former days persisted, in wringing taxes without limit from an unenfranchised people. But will a democracy, such as England is more and more becoming, persist in imposing the burden on itself? This question will presently be answered. But already the new tax proposed on spirits and beer has created a revolt. This is only the first turn of the screw, at the prospect of a rupture with Russia; what would be the effects of its full pressure in a desperate and protracted war? It is easy, too, for the Jingo, sitting in his music hall, to chant his pot-valiant stave, so long as he has neither to bleed nor to pay. Conscription would change his note. It is changed, as we see, even by an increased tax on his liquor. It may well be doubted, however, whether it would be possible, even with the most lavish expenditure supplied by the most grinding taxation, to carry out the programme of the *Fortnightly*. Britannia, it seems, instead of needing no towers along the steep, needs towers along steeps all over the globe. The Duke of Wellington once addressed to Sir Robert Peel a formal complaint that the Empire was not fortified. Peel's reply was a request that the Duke would prepare and submit a plan for the fortification of the Empire. The plan, we have reason to believe, does not appear among Peel's papers.

WE may, perhaps, have seemed to most of our readers to be guilty not only of a paradox but of a deadly heresy in questioning whether Herat was a place of unspeakable importance, and whether the occupation of it by Russia would in itself be cause enough for immediate war. Now comes, not a peace-mongering declaimer or scribbler, but a high military and Indian authority in the person of Major-General Sir Henry Rodes Green, K.C.S.I., and tells us that it would be of great advantage to England if, at the present moment, the idea could be removed from the minds of the English people that Herat is in any way the key of India. Some thirty years ago, says the Major-General, experts in Central Asian politics were under that impression; but a more accurate knowledge of the real position and value of the place has now been gained, and it is ascertained that, if an invasion of India is ever contemplated by a foreign power, there are other and better roads leading to the Indian frontier. India, Sir Henry avers, has a natural frontier, which is capable of being made impregnable; but any idea of attempting to turn Russia out of Herat, if she gets into it, or of taking possession of it ourselves, can only lead to enormous expenditure both of treasure and life, and to no practical results. Yet nothing is more certain than that, if Russia were now to occupy Herat, it would be impossible to restrain the British people from flying at her throat, and any government which should attempt to preserve peace would be swept by the national frenzy like a straw down a mill-race, so possessed are the people with the notion that Herat is the Key to India. With the Mother Country, the colonies would be plunged into a war which, if Sir Henry Green is right, would be a war about a mere chimera. Undoubtedly on this occasion the war party at St. Petersburg was thoroughly in the wrong and meant mischief; to cross bayonets in its path became imperative; but, at the same time, there is a craze about the designs of Russia, and a craze of which the danger is not past. As usual those who attempt to reason are supposed to have sold themselves to the enemy. The *Pall Mall Gazette* now lies, we are told, under that imputation. It may be said with justice to have played into the hands of Russia and every other power hostile to England by its delirious imperialism and its frantic advocacy of the war in the Soudan. But the craft of the dark conclave at St. Petersburg is not much to be dreaded, if it can inspire into its subsidized organs no more astuteness than has been displayed on this occasion by the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Open advocacy of the policy which is to be served is not the favourite tactic of Machiavelli. Secret agents of Russia, generally females, are supposed to be going about everywhere, playing the spy and weaving the meshes of intrigue. In a despotic court secret agents may be of some use; they may worm out information and acquire personal influence over men in power. If they are women they may ply their blandishments. But what can they do in a free country? What information can they get which is not accessible to all? Can they seduce a cabinet or a parliament? Yet these two hobgoblins have their influence and one day they may cost blood.