

### THE PROHIBITION BILL.

The present session of the Manitoba Legislature is prolific of legislation effecting commercial and financial interests, but by far the most striking and remarkable is, "The Liquor Act," which the premier in introducing said, ought to be named "An Act for the Suppression of the Liquor Traffic."

Although not yet up for its second reading, it may be taken for granted that it will pass the House, for it is a government measure, prepared with great care, and the premier has declared that the administration will stand or fall by it.

The bill is a voluminous document, of more than forty pages of print, but it can be intelligently described in a few short paragraphs. It completely prohibits the sale of liquors for beverage purposes within the province. The only legitimate sales shall be for use in the arts, medicine and sacraments. These sales are entrusted to druggists who take out special licenses for the purpose, and the regulations are very stringent, and evidently framed with a view to make the purpose of the law attainable.

The penalties are severe. For a first offence against the act a fine of not less than \$200 or more than \$1,000, with imprisonment for default, and for a second offence, not less than six months' imprisonment nor more than a year. A licensed druggist, who is convicted twice also loses his license and is debarred from taking out another for three years.

Wholesalers and manufacturers are not prevented from keeping on hand or making liquors for export, but there are also strict regulations for such undertakings to prevent sale for consumption in the province.

The law does not contemplate any interference with genuine private hospitality or use of liquors, but forbids the presence, use, gift, or distribution of liquors in clubs, offices, halls, places of business, public houses, boarding or lodging houses, where there is any gathering of people or any disorder. The clauses against giving or treating are particularly drastic.

In cases of accidents from intoxication, it is provided that in addition to other penalties, the person who sold or gave the liquor may be prosecuted for damages.

The machinery for enforcement is very elaborate, and in reading it one is impressed that the legislators anticipated difficulty and attempted to provide for every contingency. Salaried officers of the attorney-general's department, styled "inspectors," are charged with the enforcement, and information may be laid before police magistrates or county judges, in which cases there is no appeal from convictions. Private citizens may give

information to inspectors in confidence, and their connection with the case is not to be divulged. In a word, the responsibility for working the Act falls upon the machinery of the government and does not depend upon private prosecution, although the latter is not forbidden.

This is the first attempt in Canada to enact provincial prohibition, and the legislation is therefore unique and experimental and will command widespread attention. The premier of Prince Edward Island has given notice of a similar bill, which it is said will go into force about the same time, namely at the end of the present license year, May 1901.

### THE BUSINESS OUTLOOK.

The gentlemen at the head of our great financial institutions have an insight into the commercial affairs of the country which it is not the privilege of other business men to enjoy. They are enabled, so to speak, to view the situation from behind the scenes. Statements coming from these gentlemen regarding the commercial outlook should therefore be of special interest to the business community. At the annual meeting of the Bank of Montreal on Monday last some remarks were made which will bear consideration profitably by the business community. General Manager Clouston, after referring to the general prosperity of the country last year, said that there were indications now of over-production. Stocks in the hands of merchants were too large. "At the moment," he said, "there was something of a check, which, however, may prove highly salutary, if the commercial community will only proceed with caution till the crop is assured and matters have adjusted themselves on a more satisfactory basis."

Mr. Clouston did not refer particularly to the West, but his remarks are worthy of special consideration here at the present time. There can be no doubt, as The Commercial recently pointed out, that there was over-trading in the West last year. Too much business was done. Merchants and consumers alike bought too freely. There is now naturally something of a reaction resulting from the effect of the rather excessively optimistic feeling that prevailed last year. The Commercial looked for something of a curtailment of the volume of trade this year as a natural result of the over-trading of last year. The situation has recently been further depressed by the drouth, affecting a large part of the West.

New tenders have been called for the St. Andrew's rapids work by the Dominion government. This has been done so that a fair wage clause may be embodied.

### Will Not Exhibit.

It is understood that the implement dealers have decided not to exhibit at the Winnipeg Industrial exhibition and other western fairs this year. In fact, all the jobbers and manufacturers of implements and vehicles in the West have made an agreement to this effect, with possibly one or two exceptions. This agreement is understood to be for five years, though some dealers have only agreed to the proposal for one year. The implement men claim that the cost of exhibiting at the fairs is greatly in excess of the return received therefrom. They also claim that while their exhibits have formed an important feature of the exhibitions, they have not received as liberal treatment from exhibition managements as has been accorded exhibitors in other lines. Deficiency of accommodation for properly exhibiting and protecting exhibits from the weather, is one complaint the implement and vehicle dealers have against the leading exhibition associations. Winnipeg implement men spoken to about the matter, say, that while they do not wish to injure the Winnipeg Industrial association in any way, they have simply decided not to exhibit as a business consideration, though this desire has possibly been influenced by the trouble of past years in securing space and accommodation, etc. The absence of the implement and vehicle exhibit will be greatly missed from our summer fair, and it is to be hoped that even yet, in the interests of the exhibition association, the management thereof will be able to offer the implement men such terms as will induce them to reconsider their determination. There has certainly been a great lack of proper accommodation for implement and vehicle exhibits in the past, and now that the affairs of the exhibition association are in good shape financially, an effort should be made to meet the views of the implement dealers, at least so far as accommodation is concerned.

### British Live Stock Markets.

Liverpool, June 4.—The market for Canadian cattle was strong and prices show a further advance of  $\frac{1}{2}$ c, choice stock selling at  $13\frac{1}{2}$ c, Sheep were firm and unchanged at 15c.

London, June 4.—The tone of this market for Canadian cattle was also strong and prices for choice stock are  $\frac{1}{2}$ c higher than a week ago, at  $13\frac{1}{2}$ c to 14c.

A private cable received quoted Canadian cattle in both Liverpool and London at  $13\frac{1}{2}$ c.

At the time of the recent fire in the McCormick Company's Chicago twine factory it was stated that only 75,000 pounds of twine had been destroyed. It has since transpired that about 500,000 pounds additional was damaged by water and smoke and this twine is now being offered to the trade by the salvage company at less than current prices of twine.

A delegation from Shell River district, northwestern Manitoba, waited upon the provincial government a day or two ago to urge the extension of the Shell River branch of the Manitoba & Northwestern road into their district. The M. & N. W. is now part of the C. P. R. system, so that the deputation has also waited upon W. R. Baker, executive officer of the company in the west with the same request. Consideration has been promised by both the government and the railway company.