

gather goodly fruit. Already there are signs that the next political stride of England will be the enfranchisement of the laborers. The party fight on this question will be bitter, as the country gentlemen and their town supporters will feel that with them it is a struggle for life. That the country party should fear the laborers is of itself an unanswerable argument that they have not treated them, despite their protestations to the contrary, with kindness or justice. The centuries of wrong done to the peasants will be avenged at the polling-booths—a mode of revenge on which the landed interest may be congratulated.

We refer here with unmixed satisfaction, and commend the incident as an example to our legislators, to the independent action of the English Government in dealing with the licensing of public houses. That they were greatly helped in the election by the tavern-keepers is admitted; that that help was given because of the Licensing Act of the Liberal party was avowed. It was fully expected, therefore, that Mr. Disraeli's government would extend again to the drink interest their forfeited privileges as to keeping open at night. The Conservatives have, however, proved that they are not to be manipulated by one interest, and not to be bribed by a friendly vote. They have passed a new Licensing Act which actually shortens the hours of tavern drinking in the country towns, and only extends it half an hour in the metropolis—an extension which makes little difference, as now the houses must be cleared of customers at 12.30, whereas the old Act closed them at 12 only to new visitors, allowing those inside to sit until their liquor was finished. It will be a proud day for Canada when our Parliaments can show as much independence of class interests, and teach as wholesome a lesson to constituents who seek to make a party subservient to some sectional conspiracy against the common weal.

The Bismarck-Ultramontane battle still rages. It is a war à la *Poutrance*; Prussia versus the Papacy; Home Rule versus Foreign Interference. It is indeed but a new phase of an old struggle, nearest of any to that pictured by Shakespeare, in the scene betwixt Pandolph and King John, who being sternly asked why by force he keeps out the Pope's nominee from the See of Canterbury, replies:

"Tell the Pope this, and from the mouth of England,—
—That no Italian priest
Shall tithe or toll in our dominions."

The position is now this: The laws relating to the education and appointment of the clergy having been violated by the bishops, several of them are imprisoned. The whole Episcopal Order will shortly be confined or expelled, and a large body of priests also. What then will follow? The Chapters of the dioceses will be called on to fill the vacancies. They will refuse while the bishops are living. The Governor-General, then, of any Province where the see is vacant, will appoint commissioners to take entire charge of all the secular business and property of the see, even to the contributions of the congregations. In the case of livings the patron may fill up a vacancy caused by any priest being absent for offences against the law. If he declines then a meeting may be summoned by the local administrator, Burgomaster, or Landrath, on a petition of ten male members of the shepherdless flock, and they may appoint a pastor, thus dispensing with episcopal patronage and government altogether. The rigor and thoroughness of the new law is very startling. It is, in fact, nothing short of a reformation of the Roman Catholic Church of Prussia by the State. Now, State reformations are apt to prove as offensive as State working of churches. The sincere Romanist, by such legislation, is practically deprived of the ministrations of his religion, and, however we may pity the superstition which makes religion dependent upon the services of any official, we cannot regard the Roman Catholic population of Prussia in this crisis without a certain sympathy. Such sympathy may be a mistake, for it is rare that outsiders can properly gauge the feelings of a foreign people on ecclesiastical questions. That population may accept the reformation thus forced upon them. Stranger things than this have happened before now. If so, well—and good. We hope they have enlightenment enough to see the possibility of serving God without the Pope's help; that the sea of life may be crossed in another boat than St. Peter's. But if they have not, and they are as zealous and determined as they are spiritually blind and dependent, the German Empire will find how terrible a curse it is to a nation to have a body of citizens whose loyalty is poisoned by allegiance to a Church which looks upon all forms of government and human authority that are not inspired by its minions, as having no claims upon the reverence or obedience of those by whom it is recognized as divine. If the state policy of Prussia succeeds the Pope will have learnt a sharp lesson touching the advantage of rendering unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, a lesson which not a few in Canada sadly need teaching.