

proval. The general indisposition to enforce the Scott Act outside of the magistracy and the army of informers, official and amateur, must tell powerfully on its operation; while the magistrate who inflicted imprisonment for which he had no warrant in law is an illustration of the extreme to which the arbitrary spirit of the measure carries its devotees. The power of summarily dismissing police magistrates vested in the Local Government is in strong contrast with the safeguards with which the independence of the Superior Court Judges is shielded. Dispensing justice in the name of the Sovereign, the Superior Court judges are protected by the fiction that they can do no wrong, and they can be removed only for cause, on address of both Houses of Parliament. Of no such fiction does the police magistrate get the benefit. So far from being supposed to be incapable of doing wrong he is liable to be cast in damages from wrong done by his decisions. On a Police Magistrate of Toronto a heavy fine was once inflicted for something done in the discharge of his duty. While the powers of the police magistrates have been greatly enlarged, their liability to summary dismissal has remained, till the contrast between them and the Superior Court judges in this particular has become a striking anomaly. To this anomaly the removal of Mr. Cairns, though it may not be liable to special objection, will direct attention. The spirit of party which controls the selection of magistrates disregards fitness for the discharge of the duties, and the result is not unfrequently such "incompetency" as that signaled by Mr. Mowat in two of the dismissals under consideration. So long as Party guides in the selection of magistrates, so long shall we have incompetency in this branch of the public service to deplore.

MONTREAL is meeting but indifferent success in the fight against the small-pox. Both the number of cases and of deaths continue to increase. The disease, till recently confined to the east, has now spread over the whole city, and five hundred cases are reported in the suburbs: instead of being stamped out, it is becoming day by day less under control. The deaths last week reached two hundred and thirty-six, and the nuns, in a house-to-house visit, discovered one hundred and sixty cases of which the authorities had no knowledge. The hospital has been full and incapable of taking in additional patients; four days have sometimes elapsed after notice before a patient has been removed, and when isolation has been tried in a private house it has happened that communication with the outer world, by which necessary supplies could be got, has occurred only once in four days. Isolation of patients is very imperfect, and flight to the suburbs is to rush into the most fatal centre of the pestilence. The house-to-house vaccination, which has been promised or threatened, hangs fire. Real alarm appears at last to have taken hold of the city, and many who can get away are leaving. The fugitives sometimes carry the disease with them, and there is danger that it will spread in various directions. Ontario and the United States are taking precautions against the introduction of the malady; but in spite of all that can be done, the occurrence of isolated cases which have been carried in an undeveloped form is occasionally reported. The two or three cases that have been brought to Toronto have been successfully dealt with. The undrained suburbs of Montreal are largely responsible for the spread of the disease. Toronto and other Ontario cities are exposed to the same danger; and if they have less to fear from small-pox than Montreal, they can promise themselves no immunity from cholera on its next visitation, which may be next year. In the meantime, measures should be taken to avert the danger by which Toronto is menaced by the undrained suburbs, or they may prove as pestilent as the village of St. Jean Baptiste, in which the first focus of the small-pox now desolating Montreal was established.

PROHIBITIONISM, at the Convention held the other day, took off the mask and declared itself political. Whether it is to be called a Third Party or not is merely a question of words. It seeks to bind all its adherents to vote for Prohibitionists alone. So far as its power extends it avows its intention of excluding from the service of the State all who decline to submit to its dictation and repeat its shibboleth. However sound a man may be on all other issues, and let him be as able, as upright, as respected by his fellow-citizens, and as temperate as he will, he is to be voted down unless he will declare in defiance of the most decisive experience that he believes Prohibition to be the best remedy for drunkenness. Even total abstinence will avail him nothing if he presumes in the exercise of his free judgment to prefer the policy of Liberal Temperance or that of High License to the Scott Act. Mr. Bright, who, though a lifelong friend and advocate of temperance, has with his usual clearness of judgment discerned the folly of violent legislation, would be expelled from the service of the State; much more would Mr. Gladstone, who notoriously uses without abusing his Christian liberty in the matter of drinking wine and, as Finance Minister,

framed a measure for the admission of light claret. Not only seats in the Legislatures and the higher public offices, but School Trusteeships are to be confined to the faithful devotees of this new Islam. "Resolved, first, that the saints ought to inherit the earth; resolved, secondly, that we are the saints." Is not organized faction enough, but must organized fanaticism also lend its fell aid in shutting the gates of public life against integrity and independence? Who does not see that this moral crusade must at once give birth to a gang of political sharpers who will serve it with hypocritical zeal, use it for the purposes of their self-advancement and by its help climb over the heads of better men to the high places of the State? In truth, adventurers of this stamp are already found among the political heads of the movement in Canada as well as the United States. More than one speaker at the Convention dwelt complacently on the pliability of politicians and the ease with which they could be squeezed by the controllers of votes into supporting a measure to which in their hearts they were disinclined. To drink or sell a glass of wine or beer is a sin; but it is no sin to force a public man to vote against his conscience and betray his duty to his country. Thus does fanaticism always pervert the moral sense; men whose motives are the best are found trampling down the barrier between right and wrong, and even wading through fraud and iniquity to reach the one great object which has for the time excluded every other obligation from their minds. At the same Convention it was pronounced necessary that appointments to the magistracy should be controlled in the Scott Act interest. The Act is as adverse to liberty as the pen of an Inquisitor could make it. It forces persons to criminate themselves; it enables freemen to be sent to prison on the testimony of an informer who is not required to be even personally cognizant of the facts; it sets at naught the marriage vow by compelling husband and wife to give evidence against each other. But all this is not enough without a packed judiciary to be the sure instrument of coercion. The liquor question itself has now become a secondary consideration; first in importance for all citizens is the defence of public right and liberty against the tyranny of Prohibition.

THE human species may be divided into those who do and those who do not worship Browning. The term worship is no exaggeration. Societies, as is well known, have been formed for the purpose of mutual help and invigoration in interpreting the sacred volume and bringing to light the boundless treasures which are supposed to lie hidden beneath its inspired but enigmatic language. Dante had a chair founded to interpret him immediately after his death; but Browning has received a similar honour in his lifetime. The sceptical are in the habit of remarking that it is singular that people should be tasking their brains in concert to discover Browning's meaning when the living oracle himself is there and might, if appealed to, at once resolve their doubts. But the exploration of the mysterious is an intellectual luxury in itself, and nobody wants the propounder of the riddle to tell him the answer at the same time. Besides mystery is a wholesome exercise of faith. Why cannot Browning be as intelligible as Æschylus, Goethe, and Shelley, who are just as subjective and just as deep as he is? This is the question which the despairing student of "Gordello" or "Paracelsus" asks himself; and perhaps he begins to suspect that the age of poetry must be past and that the age of science must have fully come if the great poet of the day can be the most brain-cracking of metaphysicians. The difference between the Browning-worshipper and the Non-Browning-worshipper, we take it, is the work of Nature and congenital, so that to turn one into the other by reasoning or intellectual appliance of any kind is impossible. But if conversion were possible, it would be wrought by the fervid faith, the rich language and the impressive delivery of Archdeacon Farrar. There are some who would rather listen to the commentator than read the text.

OUR anticipation that Mr. Chamberlain's declaration against Mr. Parnell's designs and in favour of the Union would at once have a happy effect on Mr. Gladstone's health has been immediately and signally fulfilled. Mr. Gladstone is at once pronounced convalescent and issues his manifesto as leader. That the late Government when it suffered defeat on a financial question was slipping under the ropes in order to avoid the difficulty of the Irish question is not true. Slipping under the ropes is not an operation congenial to Mr. Gladstone's character, or one in which it would be possible to engage men of honour such as Lord Granville, Lord Selborne, Lord Hartington and Mr. Childers. The financial proposal was the best that could have been adopted. It was opposed on its merits only by those who would have been specially affected by the increased taxes and it was defended by the Premier in a powerful and conclusive speech. This was not courting defeat. But it is true that the Cabinet was at the time divided on the Irish question. We may add that the majority had firmly