

influence of British jurisdiction, but drunkenness is increasing—the people are taking to this gin.” The bishop candidly states that the Church Missionary Society missionaries, the Roman Catholic, and the preachers of the Lagos native church have utterly failed to evangelize certain districts near Lagos, implying that the drinking habits of the people were mainly responsible. In the compound of a village chief the bishop asked him : “ What makes the hearts of your people so hard and their houses so shabby ? ” The chief answered by pulling aside some bushes, and told the bishop to look beneath, where he saw “ hundreds, if not thousands, of empty gin bottles.” On another occasion he says that, reaching the market town of Igaun one evening last January, he wished to hire a canoe to take him over to Lagos, but was informed that he could not cross the water that night, as “ he would find all the town drunk,” a testimony, alas ! which he confirmed. The bishop was a pained witness of revellings in the market-place : women dancing wildly and men quarreling in drink. A merchant visiting Ibadan for the first time told Bishop Tugwell that he was struck in the town and market-place with the absence of English goods, altho the natives brought down large quantities of palm oil, kernels, sheep, goats, yams, etc. The bishop replied that *wholesale exchange in spirits* represented the development in trade !

To minimize these statements, Sir Gilbert Carter, Governor of Lagos, attempted a refutation, which indicates the attitude of one civil representative of Great Britain toward the drink question in Western Africa. Admitting the trade in spirituous liquors an evil, he does not, however, think that there is as much drunkenness as in many English towns. This observation may be met by a reply of Mr. Chamberlain to a member of a deputation waiting upon him in reference to West African railways on August 23d last. It was remarked that on the Gold Coast during 1894 “ the consumption of alcoholic liquors by the natives was far less than it is in the United Kingdom.” “ Yes,” retorted Mr. Chamberlain, “ but that does not amount to much. I should be very sorry if all the natives in Africa consumed as much per head as is consumed in the United Kingdom.” Sir Gilbert says that the natives visiting Ibadan and Abeokuta do not take more than a friendly glass and avoid excess. Then he continues : “ Personally I should be sorry to see the spirit traffic abolished in West Africa, because I happen to be charged with the duty of finding the necessary funds to carry on the machinery of government in one of the West African colonies, and *I know of no more satisfactory means of obtaining money than by a duty on spirits.*” He also denies the poisonous nature of the gin imported, which, if adulterated, is generally effected by water. Again he says : “ I fail to see why the import of spirits into West Africa should be prohibited any more than the manufacture of spirits should be prohibited in Europe. Here lies the root of the matter—it is a question of human freedom. Like the candid but indiscreet bishop, I prefer freedom to sobriety, especially when it can be proved that sobriety can be at-