

ST. SWITHEN'S CRY.

St. Swithen, Bishop of Winchester, who lived in the reign of Alfred, was an excellent man and Bishop, he desired that he might be buried in the open churchyard and not in the chancel of the Minster, as was usual with other Bishops, and his request was complied with. But the Monks on his being canonized, considering it disgraceful that he should lie in a public cemetery, resolved to remove his body into the choir, which was to have been done on the 15th of July, with solemn procession. It rained, however, so violently for forty days together, that the design was abandoned. A similar superstition is attached by the French to the feast of St. Medard.

Shame! would you stir up an old man's dust
Even tho' a saint he be;
My coffin nalle are red with rust
For the heavens they weep for thee
Each sailing cloud like a grey-winged dove
Droppeth down in very truth,
For like them, have I known what 'tis to love
The green world from my youth.

'Till let me hear the wild winds rave
Let me feel how fresh the soil;
Where the willows droop and the grass blades
Where the children's feet have trod
Light lies the mould on my time-bowed head
Where I slumber so calm, so long
And yet ye would change the earth's wide bed
For four steep walls of stone.

Forbid it ye dews of evenfall!
Forbid it ye clouds of Heaven!
Behold! the sky letteth down her fall
And wide are her flood-gates driven
Rush on, rush on, ye precious showers,
Sweet tides, pour down again;
Dear earth the day shall yet be ours,
In the ransom of the rain.

We were not made of the crumbling clay,
To be pent like beasts in a stall;
Or to poison the air where the living pray
While the earth has room for all.
A time shall come when the dead man's claim,
Shall make its voice be heard;
And the brow of the fool grow red with shame,
In the light of the living word.

Ashes to ashes, so should it be,
Dust unto dust returned;
The leaf to the worm, and the worm out to thee,
To the pure green grave it has earned.
Lift up then, O west wind thy warning cry,
Ye torrents speak trumpet loud,
Be your tempest, swift-rushing, a sign on high,
As the lightning from the cloud.

The wild wind lulls, so't drift the showers,
Long silent steps recalling;
I hear Heaven's tear drops on the flowers,
Like prayers on childhood falling.
Poor clay! thy day of dread is o'er
Turn to thy rest again,
And a benison, sound forever more,
In the rustling of the rain.

PROHIBITION vs. LICENSE.

We have decided to open our columns for a limited time to the discussion of the question of Prohibition vs. License, and have made arrangements with two representative writers to contribute each alternate week a communication upon the subject. We believe our readers will be interested in a fair and manly discussion of this burning question, and we trust the writers will deal with the subject in a manner becoming broad and liberal-minded men.

THE SOCIAL TYRANNY OF THE HOUR.

I am warned by the inordinate length of my last communication that I have set a bad example by sinning against the necessary newspaper canon of brevity, an offence partly due to the indiscretion of commenting on some points of your other correspondent's first letter, which I might as well have let alone, for, as I have before observed, I am not really concerned with any one's personal opinions or style of advocacy, but simply with the broad principles of liberty. I shall therefore make as brief as possible one or two remarks suggested by your correspondent's last letter, and avoid an pertinent matter in future.

Your correspondent alludes to my "contribution of ideas, theories, and assertions which have been a thousand times driven off the field of dispute," &c. I only venture to remark that somehow or other they continue to find their way back again, through the pens of infinitely abler men than "Silex" or myself, and I think they are likely to do so as long as any regard is left in the breasts of men for the eternal principles of freedom and individual responsibility.

The only justification of laws interfering with personal freedom of will and action, is an extreme necessity. The advocates of such laws in Canada assume this to exist. By the violence of their denunciations and the injustice they do not scruple to recommend, it is to be inferred that Canada must be very deeply sunk in the slough of drunkenness. In common with all who rejoice in the welfare of their country I should therefore, if I had not known it otherwise, have been delighted to learn from the statistics quoted by "Silex" from the *Times*, that Canada stands *facile princeps*, first of all the great countries of the world in the sobriety indicated by the consumption per head.

Were it not for the flagrant and perverted use made of the Bible by prohibitionist writers and orators, I should not have introduced it into any argument on the subject, and though I should be glad to receive any addi-

tional light on Biblical subjects, I have some doubts whether it is worth your correspondent's while to impart it. Not for my sake, but for the sake of your readers.

Of course I do not pretend to know what sort of people "Silex" would include among "skeptics" "of little account," but I am inclined to think his classification would embrace a very large number of men as eminent for their piety as for the soundness of their condition, and the brilliancy of their talent.

I have not asserted that the Bible anywhere *commands* the use of wine, but it is certain that there could scarcely be a stronger sanction of its use than the miracle of Cana, to say nothing of our Lord's personal practice. Any allusion to what a recent writer of eminence calls the "amazing" assumption that the wines referred to in Scripture were unfettered, is unnecessary. The most efficacious settlement of the Biblical bearing on the question would be the more constant, universal and intelligent, and less perfunctory reading of the Bible. It would, indeed, have been extraordinary had God *commanded* the use of wine. Infinitely wider is the whole tone of inspiration than the purblind stumblings of narrow men in their efforts to impose their own fanatic wills on their fellows. "Every creature of God," says St. Paul, "is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving," while, a chapter previously, he gives the natural sobriety that deacons should not be "given to much wine."

With apostolic breadth and insight writes one, not much more than 200 years ago, whose mind and soul were indeed of the apostolic cast, as well as of the most truly practical type, on the political and social questions of his day. His utterances also will be found to be "for all time." For time when the small fry of scurrilous fanatics who endeavor to affix their spurious brands of "blackguard" and "criminal" to writers of high repute, and to men of piety, honor, and good works, who may happen to be brewers or distillers, shall, like other noxious ephemera, have blurred and stung through their little day, and passed to oblivion.

"How great a virtue," says this great man, "is temperance, how much of moment through the whole life of man! Yet God commits the managing so great a trust, without law or prescription, wholly to the demeanour of every grown man. And therefore, when he himself tabled the Jews from heaven, that omer, which was every man's daily portion of manna, is computed to have been more than might well have sufficed the heartiest feeder thrice as many meals. For those actions which enter into a man rather than issue out of him, and therefore defile not, God uses not to captivate under a perpetual childhood of prescription, but trusts him with the gift of reason to be his own chooser. There were but little work left for preaching if law and compulsion should grow so fast upon those things which heretofore were governed only by exhortation."

But this is language for free men, not for slaves.

One word more of what, I fear, savors too much of personal sparring—a thing which, I shall sedulously avoid in future, as taking up time and space which might be better employed. If it is my "misfortune" not to have known that that law-makers have "for several centuries been taxing their ingenuity to frame restrictive license laws," I think I have borne greater misfortunes, and shall be able to survive this. I have no sort of pretension to universal knowledge. Your able correspondent is perfectly welcome to prove his position if he likes to take the trouble, but it seems to me that the more instances he proves, the greater number of failures of that sort of legislation he will prove also.

I see that I inadvertently committed the error of reading your correspondent's quotation from Dickens as of "Paris" instead of "France." I suppose I was misled by the general tone of the quotation, which points throughout to cities rather than to the country, and by my own knowledge of French life which was at one time tolerably familiar for an Englishman. It is of little consequence beyond giving your correspondent the trouble of correction, as it is the state of Canada—whether she is so utterly debauched and degraded as to call for the drastic measure of summary laws—that is the question. The state of other countries is not, I think, in this connection of primary importance.

It is the besetting weakness of those to whose limited perceptions all virtue concentrates in a single tenet, to think that all good men must be of their way of thinking, and conversely that men who are not of their way of thinking cannot be good. They cannot discern that one of God's most beneficial ordinances is infinite variety, and difference is an offence to them. I have recently been reading a book called "Earth's Earliest Ages," by G.H. Pember, M. A. This gentleman, who has also, as appears from his title-page, written on "The Great Prophecies," has devoted his very curious and unconstructive work to proving the demonic inspiration of spiritualism, and of the singular yet increasing theosophy. As I happen to know as much on these subjects as most ordinary men, I can bear witness to the extent and accuracy of Mr. Pember's information. His standpoint is that of the strictest orthodoxy, and the most literal interpretation of the early chapters of Genesis. Alluding to an apparently extraordinary text which both the Clements quote from the "Gospel of the Egyptians" (the solution of which, however, is not really far to seek), which was more a Gnostic than a Christian work, and most held in esteem by the sect of the Eucratites, he says:—

"Concerning these, we learn from Hippolytus, that they were very vain glorious, thinking themselves better than other men because they never ate flesh, drank nothing but water, and abjured marriage."

Speaking of the Hierophants of the modern theosophy and their doctrine, he writes: "But if we enquire what are the rules of this life, the whole system is instantly condemned by the reply that marriage is prohibited to the neophyte, and that he must abstain from meat and alcohol."

Again, speaking of the "temperance crusade," Mr. Pember says: "But while very many of those who take part in it are earnest Christians, there are others whose enthusiasm unconsciously exalts abstinence to the place of