

The Catholic Weekly Review.

A JOURNAL DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN CANADA

Reddite quæ sunt Cæsaribus, Cæsaribus; et quæ sunt Deo, Deo.—Matt 22: 21.

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TEMPERANCE LEGISLATION IN GERMANY.

THE Imperial Government has just published in the *Staatsanzeiger*, the official gazette, what it calls the "project of a law with regard to the struggle against the abuse of spiritous liquor." This Bill will shortly be put before the Bundesrath, the Council composed of representatives of the various states forming the German Empire. After it has passed this stage it will come before the Reichstag, or Imperial Parliament. In a long preamble the difficulties are set forth, which beset legislation on the subject. The preamble points out what has been done in other countries, and with what result, and it states that the Bill has been framed with due regard to the altered times and circumstance, since previous laws bearing on the subject were passed. Then follows a mass of statistics about the consumption of spirits in Germany, on the consequences of their abuse—diseases, suicides, crimes, the relapses of criminals, etc.—on the number of places for selling spirits in the various states of the Empire, and so on. The evils specified the Bill endeavours to meet in a threefold manner, and it is consequently divided into three sections, of which the following are the principal features: Sec. I. deals with the licenses of the places for the sale of spirits and which are of three kinds; the ordinary public-house, the *gastwirtschaft*, where food has also to be prepared for the guests ordering it, and the retail sellers, who are defined as persons sell in quantities not exceeding 50 litres (a litre is equal to about 1½ pints). To obtain a license for either of the three, proof has to be furnished that there is a want for the sale of drink in the locality; the person applying must be respectable, and the authorities must be satisfied that the premises are suitable for the business. The retailer is not allowed to sell in quantities under half a litre. The publican, as well as the *gastwirt*, must keep ready in stock non-intoxicants, to be supplied to such of their guests as order them. The local authorities have the right to order all the three kinds of places not to be opened before eight o'clock in the morning, also to restrict the employment of females as barmaids. In none of the places youths who are not yet 16 years old may be served with spirits for consumption on the premises, unless in the company of elders. Neither of the three classes of licenses may sell to persons under the influence of drink, or to persons known as habitual drunkards, and who have been punished as such. The publican who has allowed a person to get drunk on the premises, can only evict him, after having taken the necessary steps that he may be conveyed home or to the next police station; that person has to pay the expense incurred in the operation. The second part begins by stipulating that a publican must not supply drink, for consumption on the premises, on credit—this evidently aims at the pernicious practice of allowing working men to run up a bill for settlement on their pay-day. Any debt incurred in contravention of this is not recoverable in law. Any person being found drunk in a public place so as to give scandal may be fined 100 marks, a sum which is equivalent to \$25, or punished with imprisonment up to a month. Any person who, in consequence of habitual drunkenness, has become incapable of managing his business,

or by it exposing his family to want, or endangers the safety of others, may be put under guardianship, and be declared to be in every respect equal to a minor, and be treated as such. The third section of the Bill enumerates the penalties, money fines, and terms of imprisonment, incurred by a contravention of the above regulations.

ANOTHER "RESCUED" NUN STORY.

IN Monday's *Times* a sensational letter with regard to the alleged rescue of a nun was published. It was signed, "A Firm of London Solicitors," but no name whatsoever of person or place was given. The nun, it was stated, was detained against her will in the unnamed convent, and heroically rescued by a member of the firm.

The following letter from Mr. Dudley Leathley, of 59, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, in reference to the remarkable story, appeared in Tuesday's *Times*:

"Sir,—I trust you will allow me, as one who has much to do with convents both here and abroad, to reply to the letter of "A Firm of London Solicitors." In the first place, I call upon the writers to have the courage to sign their own names, and not to traduce the characters of religious over a *nom de plume*. Let them honestly give the name—not, of course, of their own client; that would be a breach of professional confidence—but of the convent; then its Superiors can give their version of the affair.

But, while waiting for this, let me take the writer's own statement. The lady who is supposed to be shut up writes to them on the 22nd of August, a Saturday, and they receive a letter in due course of post on the Monday following. Then a perfect stranger to the Superioress goes to the convent, asks for his client, sees the Superioress without difficulty or delay, and actually sees the lady, who is presumed to be incarcerated, a few minutes after his arrival. These facts seem to be somewhat inconsistent with a convent being a gaol. If the writers are, as they say, London solicitors, they know, or easily may know, that most of the best firms of solicitors in London at times act for ladies who are in convents, either here or abroad; and if they will take the trouble to enquire they will find the universal testimony of Protestant solicitors so acting to be that these ladies have entered convents of their own free will, have remained there by their own desire, and could leave if they wished to do so. The solitary statements made by your correspondents, which can be tested on the information now before us, is absolutely false—namely, their partner's assertion to their client, "that a convent was a gaol." What are we to think of a man who says this sort of thing when, if he knows anything about the matter, he must know that there is hardly a noble Catholic family in England (if, indeed, there be an exception) some of whose members are not in convents here or abroad? Does he suppose that they would allow their relatives to enter—much less to remain in—"gaols"? He cannot say that the old Catholic families in England do not know all about convents. Then take the thousands of nuns in this country who are daily engaged out of doors in active work among the poor, many (such as the Sisters of Charity) quite alone. If convents are "gaols," why do not some of these take flight when outside the convent walls? There are many ladies who wish to remain in convents, but are not allowed (for some good cause or other) to do so. I do not know, and I never have known, one who was detained in a convent against her will."

No reply to Mr. Dudley Leathley's letter appeared in Wednesday's *Times*.—*Liverpool Catholic Times*.