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## The Effect of the Drink Habit in Great Britain.

In remarking upon the general feeling of alarm among thoughtful students of the nation's development caused by the demoralizing effect of the drink habit in Great Britain, the *Toronto Globe* says:—"Races long exposed to the influences of alcoholic beverages, like many of the inhabitants of southern Europe, become comparatively immune through the process of elimination. For many generations the most susceptible have been debauched and killed off, until the survivors have inherited such strong powers of resistance that excessive indulgence is rare. In contrast to these we have the North American Indians, never exposed to the eliminating process and succumbing to alcohol as to a devastating plague. The Anglo-Saxon may be regarded as midway between the two, the more recent introduction of alcoholic beverages leaving a susceptibility not yet-eliminated. This natural weakness, coupled with the high price of food and the recognition of beer as a staple article of diet, is leading to disastrous consequences. Statistics show that, among the nations of the world, England has the greatest proportion of drunkards, with Scotland second. The matter was debated by the British Medical Association, and substantial evidence was adduced to show that drink was responsible for more than half the criminality, insanity and lunacy of Britain. It was also stated that nearly one-third the deaths in Britain were due to drunkenness. This would be regarded as hysterical exaggeration were it not sustained by the declarations of so conservative a body as the British Medical Association. The most serious feature of this alarming evil is the prevalence of drunkenness among women. The number of women arrested for drunkenness in the London city police districts in 1902 was double that of 1892, and, according to a London County Council report, female inebriates have cost the ratepayers £200,000. Drunkenness among women is not confined to any class, but the well-to-do middle class is said to be an exception. The aristocracy and the lower classes meet on the same plane in their separate ways. The connection is obvious between this deplorable condition and the decline in the birth rate, the high death rate among infants, and the difficulty of finding suitable men for the army and the police service. Drunken parents are producing a race tainted with insanity and epilepsy, and feeble in mind and body. The economic aspect of the question is also serious. Men who have studied the situation at first hand say that drunkenness and degeneracy among workmen, accompanied by a certain haughty indifference on the part of big manufacturing concerns, are more serious menaces to Britain's industrial and commercial supremacy than are the much-discussed hostile foreign tariffs. The decay of British manhood and womanhood, whatever the cause, would be the greatest of all calamities. The hopeful feature of the situation is the determined effort of a strong and active element of the population to grapple with the evil and minimize its force and influence."

## Reforms Proposed for Macedonia.

The European powers have at length taken a hand in the affairs of Macedonia which it is expected will at least effect some temporary amelioration of conditions in that country, although little hope is afforded of any thorough-going and lasting reform. The scheme adopted by the powers will give to Russia and Austria for the period of two years control of and surveillance over all branches of the administration of the disturbed provinces. The proposals include the appointment of one Austrian and one Russian assessor to be attached to the staff of Hilmi Pasha, the Inspector General, with a corps of assistants, secretaries and interpreters, whose duties it will be to exercise control over all the acts of the provincial authorities. A European General in the Turkish service is appointed to command the gendarmerie, and he will be assisted by an adequate number of Russian and Austrian officers acquainted with the language of the country and, if necessary, by Austrian and Russian non-commissioned officers. Two further important proposals which, it is expected will be bitterly opposed by the Sultan, provide for the establishment of communal autonomy and the rectification of the present communal boundaries, with the view to the better distribution of the various communities, and the creation of spheres—Bulgarian, Albanian, Servian etc., which shall be more homogeneous in nationality and

religion. Other points of the scheme deal with the relief of refugees, the rebuilding of villages, schools and churches, the disbandment of the irregular troops, and the prohibition, of the employment of Bashi Bazooks. Opposition to the whole scheme is expected on the part of the Porte, but the Austrian and Russian Ambassadors demand the adoption of the plan with the least possible delay. In view of this movement toward the pacification of Macedonia, the Bulgarian army is being demobilized.

## Canada's Dis- satisfaction.

It is evident from the tone of the Canadian press that there is a pretty general and strong feeling of dissatisfaction all over the Dominion in reference to the result of the Commission in the Alaska Boundary case. It is not so much a feeling of disappointment over the loss of territory to which those Canadians who had carefully investigated the subject generally agreed in believing that the British claim was good. Canada would doubtless have accepted with a good grace—whatever her disappointment—the finding of an impartial Court of Arbitration. For that she had asked, and that the United States had emphatically refused. The dissatisfaction of Canada in this matter arises in part from the fact that the character and personnel of the commission as agreed upon between the British and the United States Governments made a decision favorable to the Canadian claims impossible. The commissioners appointed by the United States, and accepted by Great Britain, were not, as it had been understood by Canada they would be, jurists of repute who would be likely to regard the case to be submitted to them from a judicial point of view; they were politicians with political interests at stake, and they had everyone of them prejudged the case before their appointment. Under the circumstances the most that Canada could hope for from the tribunal was a disagreement of the commissioners. Another cause of dissatisfaction in Canada is the course pursued by Lord Alverstone as British commissioner. It would doubtless be in a high degree presumptuous for any person or any newspaper in this country to call in question the correctness of Lord Alverstone's judgment in the case. But when the Canadian commissioners unite in saying that Lord Alverstone agreed with them in a certain view as to the proper location of a part of the boundary line and united with them in placing this view before the commission, and afterwards, without consultation with the Canadian commissioners, made further concessions to the claims of the United States, what are we to think—can such action be termed judicial? Sir Louis Jetté and Mr. Aylesworth have made it very plain that they could not regard it as judicial, and accordingly refused to sign the decision. So far it does not appear that Lord Alverstone has made any reply to the statements of Messrs. Jetté and Aylesworth, and it is even intimated that he intends to make no reply. Whether he can afford, personally and the interests of the Empire, to pass by in silence so serious an allegation, is of course for his lordship to decide. Certainly the people of Canada would be much interested in hearing what he has to say about the matter. It may be said that the territory in dispute—or for that matter the whole of Alaska—is not worth going to war over; and that is very true. It may be said that it is better for all concerned to have the dispute settled as it has been than to have it continued as a possible cause of greater trouble; and that also may be true. But it is quite evident that such a method of settling the difficulty could not be expected to give eminent satisfaction in Canada.

## How it Appears in England.

The manner in which Canada receives the announcement of the decision in the Alaska Boundary Case is of course a matter of some interest in Great Britain. As to the expression of British public opinion on the subject a despatch to the *New York Evening Post* says:—"There is no denying the widespread feeling of uneasiness provoked by the official and unofficial Canadian outburst of anger over the Alaska Boundary award. To-day's papers flame forth with headlines after this manner: "Injustice to Canada," "Forced to Accept a Packed Tribunal," and Englishmen have of late years had so many revelations of Ministerial ineptitude that, in the absence of official denials, they are half prepared to believe that Canada has been most badly treated, both at Washington and Downing street.

Even such mild-mannered Imperial peacemakers as the venerable Lord Strathcona talk in the same strain. Moreover, Mr. Chamberlain's friends are anxious to remind one that the commission was formed when the Colonial Office was in the hands of that estimable country gentleman, Lord Onslow, Mr. Chamberlain being in South Africa, while the award came after Mr. Chamberlain had quitted the office. You cannot of course, get any Englishman to admit that the Lord Chief Justice is anything else than what The Spectator describes him to-day, namely a man of honor and a conscientious jurist, but there stands the formal detailed charge of the Canadian commissioners above their own signatures in The Times, that Lord Alverstone first agreed with them that the Canadian contentions regarding the Portland Canal must prevail, and that Canada would be given the four islands named; that he also joined them in a memorandum to the same effect, read to the whole commission, and then, at the last moment, for no stated reason, handed two of the four islands over to the United States and, in the words of the Canadian commissioners, wholly destroyed the strategic value to Canada of the remaining islands. Whether the islands are of such value or not, there is clear charge of breach of faith, which the friends of Canada here advise is a justification, if proved, for a refusal to accept the award, leaving the British Ministers to explain as best they can. Lord Alverstone has told an interviewer that he will not stoop to refute such an allegation but, as one reviewer says, "the circumstances are so grave and so full of possibilities of trouble that it is his bounden duty to refute it."

## Disasters.

The Monday morning papers reported a number of serious disasters in the United States, and a fire in the Vatican palace at Rome. A fire which occurred on Coney Island, N. Y., on Sunday is said to be the most disastrous in its history. As a result 300 buildings were destroyed, 500 persons made homeless, two persons killed, one mortally injured and a score of others more or less severely hurt. The property loss is estimated at a million dollars.—Another fire which started in a five storey tenement house on Eleventh Avenue, New York, resulted in the death of twenty-three persons. A remarkable thing about this fire is that, as reported, it was practically extinguished in twenty minutes from the time that it broke out, the property loss being only about \$7,000. The house is said to have been well supplied with fire escapes but the passage to the ladders was blocked by those who were overcome by smoke or were crushed to death by others in the mad rush to escape.—On Saturday fifteen persons were killed and more than fifty injured, some fatally, in a collision on the Big Four railroad on the outskirts of Indianapolis. The passenger train, which collided with a freight train, was carrying more than 600 persons, most of whom were students of Purdue University and their friends on the way from Lafayette to Indianapolis for the annual foot-ball game.—The fire in the Vatican broke out at 8.30 o'clock Sunday evening in that portion of the Palace which contains the hall of inscriptions where the Pope gives his audiences, adjacent to the famous Pinacoteca or gallery of pictures. The fire seems to have gained considerable headway before it was discovered, causing much alarm and confusion. The firemen of Rome were called in to subdue the fire. The Pope was present at the fire, and a number of the Italian authorities hurried to the scene and were invited to enter, which they did. Those present included the Mayor of Rome, the Prefect and the Minister of Justice, besides police officials. The firemen succeeded in controlling the fire before it had spread widely. The extent of the damage done is not stated, but while it will doubtless be considerable, it does not appear that the art treasures of the Palace have suffered severe loss.

## Politics in Ontario.

The result of the bye-elections last week in Ontario was to leave the two parties in the same relation numerically as before. In Muskoka, where the Government supporter, Dr. Bridgland, had died, Mr. Mahaffy, a Conservative, was elected by a considerable majority, and in Sault Ste. Marie, where the opposition member had been unseated, a Government supporter was returned. This will leave the Ross Government with a majority of four in the House after selecting one of its supporters as speaker. There is, however, another constituency, North Renfrew, which has now been kept without any representation in the Legislature for nearly a year and a half. This is a close constituency and will doubtless be the scene of a fierce political contest whenever the election shall be brought on. If the Government shall carry North Renfrew its majority will be increased to five, but if not, it will be reduced to three, which would be a very narrow majority in a House of nearly a hundred members.