

## The Week.

AN INDEPENDENT JOURNAL OF POLITICS, SOCIETY, AND LITERATURE.

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So odious and dangerous, says Mr. Mowat, is the enforcement of the Scott Act, owing to the feeling against it, that hardly any of the justices of the peace can be induced to do their duty in Scott Act cases. A justice of the peace who should act would be exposed not only to unpopularity but to outrage. It is therefore necessary to set aside all the ordinary safeguards of personal liberty by sending down special magistrates, with arbitrary powers, and selected in the interest of the promoters of the Act, so that the magistrate is at once prosecutor and judge. Some of these men, Mr. Mowat admits, have not even had the necessary legal training, to get men legally trained to accept the place being often impossible. In other words, by legislation which does not carry with it the consciences of the people, a number of districts in this law-abiding country have been got, as regards this subject, into the condition of Ireland, and it has become necessary to resort to what in the case of Ireland would be considered an extraordinarily violent measure of coercion.

THE Provincial Government has been interviewed on the subject of Prohibitionist text-books. It was submitted that text-books ought never to be made the instruments of any party or propagandist object, and that nothing ought to be introduced into them but that which is universally accepted as truth. The doctrine of total abstinence, whether true or false, is not yet universally accepted as truth, since the vastly larger portion of the civilised world holds and acts upon the opposite principle. The New Testament is still the authority generally received in morals, and there cannot be a shadow of doubt that its teaching is temperance, not total abstinence. Christ, in fact, according to those who pronounce any use of wine noxious and immoral, must have been either ignorant or criminal—ignorant if He did not know what mischief wine would do; criminal, if knowing this, He not only set the example of using it, but consecrated its use in a sacrament for ever. Moreover, great Christian Churches, such as the Roman Catholic and the Anglican, by celebrating the sacrament in accordance with what they deem Christ's ordinance, practically assert that the use of wine is not immoral. It is also proved that the Prohibitionist's doctrine is, as a matter of fact, as far as possible from being the unanimous verdict of the scientific world. That text-books ought not to be made the vehicles of party dogma would seem to be the plain dictate of reason and justice. Yet the answer is conclusive. The Government cannot risk the loss of the Prohibitionist vote.

THERE is nothing disparaging to woman in refusing to send her into the political arena. This only is implied—that the spheres of the sexes, though equal, are by nature distinct, and that public life belongs to the man, while maternity and home belong to the woman. The reason why men make the laws is that men alone can enforce them. A law which has not force to back it is a nullity, as would soon be seen if women were to become the legislators, and were to legislate in the fashion threatened by some of them. Nature will not allow her landmarks to be removed, though society may be thrown into confusion in attempting to remove them. That the spirit of politics will not be improved by casting womanhood and home into the caldron, we have already had abundant proof; no violence or bitterness can go beyond those of platform women. The fact is that the true woman, with her gentle and refined nature, shrinks from the platform and the polling booth, while public excitement is sought by those who are the least genuine representatives of the sex, so that, in reality, instead of more of the good influence of women in the government, we should be likely to have less. The women who lead this movement do not mean to stop at the suffrage: they mean to sit in Parliament and hold public office; the first concession, in fact, involves the second: and we shall presently have to consider whether all distinction of sex is to be set aside, and whether women, like men, can be held responsible and called to account for public conduct. What the women themselves expect is that they will get rid of the limitations and yet retain the privileges of their sex. They will find in the end that this cannot be; that if the limitation is to be set aside the privilege must be renounced; and perhaps their sisters who do not wish to set aside the limitation may be involved in the

forfeiture of the privilege. The only practical question is what government is the best. If a masculine government is the best, it is the best for the women as well as for the men. But female suffrage will probably come. It will come, like other improvident extensions of the suffrage, because somebody wants the female vote, and demagogic legislatures have not firmness to resist. So we shall go on dealing with the franchise till we arrive at an anarchy out of which, at the bidding of stern necessity, a strong and masculine government will arise.

THE argument of the Female Suffragists that women must vote, because otherwise the property held by them would be unrepresented, is based on a mere delusion. No property is represented except the bare minimum necessary for an electoral qualification. Everything which a man has beyond that minimum is just as much unrepresented as if it were held by a woman. Property is no longer the real basis of the suffrage, nor does abstract justice, any more than social policy, enjoin us to drag women into politics, and disturb the relations of the sexes. It never has been and cannot be alleged that property held by women suffers any special legislative injustice. Equally fallacious is the allegation that women are an unenfranchised class. They are not a class but a sex. Their interests are bound up with those of their husbands and their male relations, and, unlike those of an unenfranchised class, are guarded by affection. It is hardly possible that in the matter of matrimonial relations, women's property, or any other matters affecting female interests, a legislature entirely composed of women could go further in doing what is supposed to be justice to women than male legislatures have gone. It might even be surmised that a legislature entirely composed of women would do less injustice to men.

ONE of our journals complains that the French from St. Pierre and Miquelon encroach on the rights of the Newfoundlanders. To obtain the removal of this injustice, it says, persistent pressure must be applied to the Colonial Office. It then proceeds to reprove British apathy and pusillanimity because the English Government prefers snubbing Newfoundland to getting into a quarrel with France. We should rather think it did, especially when it has Irish rebellion, Russia, Egypt, and Burmah on its hands. "They (the English people) care very little whether the people of Newfoundland fish or do anything else; all they object to is being bothered on their account." Nothing is more true, nor could anything be more natural. The classes in which the spirit of Imperial ambition resided, and which would have been willing to rush into a war with France about a question of Newfoundland bait, no longer reign in England, and the democracy which reigns in their place is totally indifferent to anything which does not concern itself and its own industries. Let us lay this fact to heart: it materially affects our destiny. Our contemporary proposes that two of the Channel Islands should be ceded to France in exchange for St. Pierre and Miquelon. This we expect the British people to do for us while we are levying protective duties on their goods! What can be done in the way of negotiation the British Government will faithfully do; but it will not go to war with France or cede the Channel Islands.

By enabling a patriotic Government to triumph over Parliamentary cabal, and, by placing the national defences for seven years beyond the reach of demagogism, Germany has very likely assured to herself peace. Boulanger will now be apt to subside. The state of the French finances is such that he cannot go on spending for ever. Now let England beware that the wounded and unquiet ambition of France does not look elsewhere for its satisfaction. In the *Nineteenth Century*, M. Reinack, the editor of the *République Française*, has an article written in a tone of the most engaging moderation, assuring us that there is nothing to be apprehended from Boulanger, and full of peace and good-will towards England. But he cannot make us forget that France has been giving England all the trouble that she could in Egypt, and is doing so still.

It never was more necessary to remember that our English news comes through New York. England is still in extreme peril, nor can any one pretend to say that it will not after all be wrecked by the crude and ignorant democracy into whose hands supreme power has been thrust by the recklessness of faction. But so far as we can see or hear from private sources, the Government, though not adamant, is tolerably firm, and the Unionists are pretty staunch. The Unionists are somewhat disquieted no doubt by the restless hankerings of Sir George Trevelyan and some of the Radical wing for a reconciliation of what they style the Liberal party. A patching-up of this kind, at the expense of principle, is in fact the immediate danger. But Mr. Gladstone, fortunately for the Unionist cause, adheres inflexibly to his own plan. He is satisfied of his own infallibility, and