

tending to designate a *nuance* less pronounced. He petitioned against the return of M. Chapeau as illegal; and if the new Parliament had not been dissolved before the case could be heard, it is probable that the question of the undue influence of the clergy would have been raised at this early date.

At the General Election of 1854 all the Roman Catholic clergy in the country opened fire from their pulpits upon M. Letellier. They confounded him with *L'Avenir*; and though M. Casgrain tells us there was nothing either in his writings or his speeches that would justify his being placed among the enemies of the clergy or the Church, his defence necessarily took an anti-clerical colour. The attack was so overdone that the bishop called upon one of the priests to retract something he had said. The retraction was characteristic. "I said it, my friends, it is true; and this gives additional force to the proverb, 'that all truth is not proper to be told.'" M. Letellier was grimly amused at the play on the words; and when the wound had partially healed he used to entertain his friends by recounting the apology which affirmed the original statement with emphasis and buttressed it with the support of a familiar proverb.

These specimens of M. Letellier's contests with the priests show the powerful influence against which he had to contend. Other candidates of the party to which he belonged fared no better; some of them, if possible, fared worse. As a result of their interference in the Charlevoix election in 1876, the Supreme Court of Quebec annulled the election. The "undue influence" of the priests in elections received a check. But M. Letellier felt that the civil authority was of itself powerless to put an end to this abuse. Being then a member of Mr. Mackenzie's Government, he conferred with his colleagues on the subject, and drew up a "respectful remonstrance" to the authorities of Rome, whence a telegram came in reply directing the priests to abstain from interference in elections. But it was too late; the conflict had been entered upon with more than the usual energy.

An Apostolic Delegate was sent from Rome to enquire into the facts. The bishops had previously inspired the priests to give their blessing to one political party and their curses to another. Mgr. Conroy had come to make peace for the time being, and he would make the bishops explain away their own words. In their joint letter of the 22nd September, 1865, they had said, "A political party may be judged dangerous, not only by its programme and its antecedents, but also by the separate (*particuliers*) programmes of its leaders, of its principal members and of its press, if this party does not disavow and definitely separate from the offenders." Mgr. Conroy brought the bishops together and asked them to prepare another joint pastoral explaining these words away. According to the author of "La Source du Mal de l'Epoque au Canada," the Apostolic Delegate himself wrote the explanatory pastoral of October 11, 1877; the bishops not being able to agree upon one prepared by one of their own number whom he had named for that purpose. But this explanatory pastoral did not at once secure the entire submission of the clergy, and the Congregation of the Propaganda, September 13, 1871, sent to the Archbishop of Quebec a decree which M. Casgrain regards as "destined to put an end to the religious war set on foot in this country against the Liberals." The appearance of "La Source du Mal de l'Epoque," which M. Casgrain may possibly not have seen, since it has been interdicted by the Bishop of Montreal and has been rigidly suppressed, makes it certain that this effect has not been produced; and we are assured that this ultramontane pamphlet, which marks the boldest step yet taken by the extreme party, expresses the opinions of a great majority of the priests in the dioceses of Quebec and Three Rivers. There are different ways of exercising clerical influence, of which the frankest is not always the most dangerous. In Ontario this influence is not unfelt; though probably nothing is done on which a complaint similar to that sent to Rome by Mr. Mackenzie's Government could be founded; and surely an influence which can be exercised with impunity is not less dangerous than one which it is possible to check. The confession of M. Letellier that the civil authority is insufficient to protect the citizens against undue clerical influence in political affairs, and that this influence can only be effectually curbed by the exercise of authority by the Roman Congregations, throws a flood of light upon the situation and reveals a helplessness which is not gratifying to our self-love. THORPE MABLE.

SIR J. LUBBOCK thinks that the great readers of the future will be workmen and artisans, who will find in quiet study the necessary complement to their mechanical toil; whilst professional men will seek relief from sedentary pursuits in manual games and out-door exercise. We agree with him that workingmen are certain to become greater readers. But the appetite for books grows with what it feeds on, and experience seems to show that the student is likely to grow more bookish than ever.—*Manchester Examiner*.

THE ALCOHOL QUESTION.

In these days of rigid analysis, when everything, even Scripture itself, is subjected to the keenest scrutiny and criticism, it would seem strange that the gross misstatements and pseudo-scientific jargon of Prohibition lecturers and advocates should pass current so long without serious contradiction and exposure. While the teetotallers confined themselves to the reformation of the drunkard and restricting the liquor traffic—especially in ardent spirits—to reasonable bounds, they were doing society a service and deserved the encomiums of all good citizens. But finding that their efforts did not always succeed, and that their profession was a profitable one, they have at last come to denounce every drop of alcohol as a virulent poison and to roundly abuse everyone who does not agree with them. The London *Lancet*, in a recent editorial on the subject, says: "The intemperance of the teetotallers has greatly hindered the cause of temperance. Their denunciations of moderation and moderate drinking have estranged whole classes of men who would have brought strength and help to their cause. Their dogmatism about what constitutes food and what poison, and about the injurious effects of alcohol, has excited ridicule and laughter rather than intelligent interest. By such an attitude the medical profession has been prevented from co-operation with those who see in the drunkenness of the country a gigantic evil and disgrace to be remedied at any cost short of that of talking nonsense."

Their assumption that alcohol is not a food rests, as I pointed out in a recent address to the National Liberal Temperance Society, upon the hypothesis of Liebig, which was abandoned years ago. The popular notion in regard to food is rather erroneous. For instance, the unscientific mind divides the ingesta, or all material taken into the system, into "food" and "drink." Such a classification is completely worthless for physiological purposes. "Food" and "drink" constitute terms referring only to the particular state any article for consumption may happen to be in, viz., in a solid or liquid state. What is drunk, for instance, and this holds particularly good in the case of milk, may be very rich in food, or solid matter, while in the food we eat there is invariably a large quantity of liquid matter. Hence the separation of the ingesta into food and drink is not suitable for scientific purposes. The two real factors in life are food and air. Regarded then in this comprehensive light food embraces both solid and liquid matter.

Liebig divided the ingesta into two classes, nitrogenized, or those principles which contained nitrogen, and the non-nitrogenized, or those not containing any. The former he considered true tissue-forming or "histogenetic" material, the latter as being simply heat producers. The former he termed the "plastic elements of nutrition," the latter the "elements of respiration," or as they are now termed "calorificants." This only holds good in part, however, for it has since been shown that true histogenetic material may in certain cases be utilized in the place of non-nitrogenized material to produce heat, and that, *vice versa*, the latter may take the place of the former, an instance of which we have in the formation of adipose tissue from the fats and starches. Liebig's classification still holds good, however, for various reasons—one being its convenience.

Muscular force, according to Liebig, involved the destruction of muscular tissue; consequently it was held that non-nitrogenous principles, since they did not, according to Liebig, enter into tissue formation, could not be considered in the light of foods. According to this view nitrogenous matter alone constituted the source of nervous and muscular force and energy. This doctrine was generally accepted, and until recently held to be a scientific truth. Such was the high standing of its author that it—though not based upon any experimental data—formed the standard by which the nutritive value of any food was judged. Gradually, however, experimental enquiry has demonstrated its error, and it is now completely rejected.

If muscular action is coincident with, or involves the destruction of, muscular tissue, then the product of destruction or decomposition of such tissue must of necessity be eliminated from the body, and the amount of such elimination would bear a direct proportion to the amount of energy expended. Now the principal channel by which nitrogen is eliminated from the system is the kidneys, through which it escapes in the form of urea. Such was the general acceptance of Liebig's hypothesis that chemists have asserted, until quite recently, without any analytical proof that such was really the case, that the amount of urea eliminated was increased with the amount of work expended. Space is too short to give the many experiments that went to prove in the most decided and conclusive manner that so far from increasing in proportion to the power expended the amount of urea was in many cases diminished. These amply proved that muscular-tissue disintegration could not be the source of muscular power, and, if not, then the true source must be looked for elsewhere.