

ern Europe, is the result of a belief held, not by the people, but by the governing class in England, that Mahometanism can be reformed; but the massacres of Bulgaria is the startling rebound of the crooked stick that the politicians of England had tried with much pains to straighten. Paris thought it could regulate licentiousness by putting all its houses of bad fame under government license and inspection, but it is now, after thirty years of experience, sick of the abominable business. The old Catholics thought they could reform the Church of Rome; they too are beginning to find they have on their hands in that very crooked stick, a very hopeless task.

Side by side with the above bundle of "crooked things" ought to be placed, in the estimation of many people, the modern traffic in distilled liquors and poisonous chemicals, a business so crooked that all the churches and parliaments in Christendom cannot, by legislation and restriction, make it straight. Is this opinion, this classing of the liquor traffic with things irreclaimable and irremediable an exaggerated view of the evils of the traffic, or is the opinion founded on fact and can it be justified in the ears of good sense and calm reason:

STATE OF THE QUESTION.

Now, in approaching the calm and dispassionate treatment of this important enquiry let the reader remark that our business at present is not with the wine traffic of the vine-growing countries of Europe, nor with the wine traffic of the country and times of the Bible, but with the traffic in distilled and fermented liquors and chemical compounds, as that traffic exists to-day in Anglo-Saxon countries, as it exists to-day, coming nearer home, in our own Dominion. It is wise and well to narrow thus the field of discussion. Just as in discussing the merits and demerits of the theatre as a practical question, or the merits and demerits of slavery, it is best to exclude from the enquiry the theatre and slavery as they might exist in some Utopia, and narrow down the enquiry to these institutions as we see them existing now and here in society, so