

GOTHENBURG AND DRINK.

A System That is as Great a Failure as Out-and-Out Prohibition.

(From The Licensed Victuallers Gazette.)

When anyone becomes enamoured of a custom, system, or idea he colors and magnifies everything relating to it so as to fall in with his own notion. Thus, in fact, regards it through a false medium. Becomes eloquent about everything in its favor, but loses sight entirely of whatever may fairly and truly be urged against it. He only sees what he wishes to see. So it is with the Bishop of Chester. After enormous thought, correspondence and talk his mind has become so saturated with the Gothenburg plan that he has literally got the Scandinavian scheme on the brain. As Portland, in the State of Maine, is the headquarters of the abominable Prohibition of America, so is the Swedish port the foundation of an absurd project which the Bishop of Chester most anxiously and earnestly desires to see upon England. We may be glad of the timber, the iron ore, or other products that may reach us from the distant port, but we will not receive its strange licensing device as one of the exports. We don't care about the color, the complexion or probabilities, when a change of manners and customs, as existing in a foreign land is proposed to us. No; but we do want to know something about the true state of the case, and how the new-fangled measures work in those countries adopting them. We can find nothing in the drinking habits of the Swedes or Norwegians that would be good for us to imitate, neither in early nor recent periods, and certainly not their practice of to-day, loudly vaunted that it may be. We are now favored with some practical and most valuable information from the pen of Thomas R. Dewar, of Messrs. John Dewar & Sons (Limited), Perth, N. B. and London, direct from Gothenburg, visited by him during the present month, and he tells us what he has himself witnessed. It is not circumstantial, but direct evidence. From his long letter, which is, indeed, a treat upon the subject, we find facts that are recorded nowhere else, and they cannot be controverted. He says this: "While walking through the streets I was somewhat puzzled to see corkscrews hanging outside a large number of shops, until I was enlightened by seeing a man come out of a place with a bottle, draw the cork, drink the beer, and take the bottle back. This is how things are managed in Gothenburg. The trader, not being allowed to permit his customer to drink in the establishment, he obligingly places a corkscrew just outside the door, so that the customer may use it should the idea enter his head. Now about a glass? Well, if a customer asks for the loan of a glass for a few moments, would it not be churlishness if the owner of the proprietor to refuse? How does he know what it is for? Besides, Scandinavians are very obliging, and if anyone borrows anything he is sure to return it." This is what is done in Sweden. We pass on to a hotel experience.

"It was one of the best houses and had about 150 bedrooms, and one evening while I was there I had a few friends with me sitting on the balcony. I asked the landlord if he had any gin or brandy. He had both, so I asked for some to be sent out on to the balcony; but no, this could not be done. There was a difficulty in the way, but he would be very pleased to send it up to my room. Compelled to send it up, I returned there, but there was no gin or brandy charged on my bill; but there was a fair amount down for sherry, although I had not had a single glass. This, it was explained to me, had to be done, as the house possessed no spirits license. Such a tricky system as this, we are informed by persons who have resided in the United States, is quite com-

mon there under the prohibitory law, evader in every shape and form being the order of the day. Mr. Dewar tells us that the number of cases of drunkenness meeting his eye was such, that he wondered what the previous state of the place could have been. For example, on a market day he drove out of Gothenburg, and came to the conclusion, that it was evidently the custom of those coming in to buy bottles before leaving again for use on the "return voyage"; for while driving along he counted some six or eight cases of drinking drunk in different parts of the evening. He found that during 1892 there were 4,066 convictions for drunkenness in Gothenburg, and this in a place of about 108,000 inhabitants speaks for itself, for the police "spotted" one in twenty-six if the inhabitants, some people may wonder whether there were any more whom the intelligent Scandinavian "Robert" failed to see. In England the convictions for drunkenness are not more than three per thousand. In Gothenburg the ratio per thousand, is thirty-eight per thousand. Surely the Bishop of Chester cannot wish to level us up to such a figure as that.

The letter concludes with these sensible remarks: "I am always ready to help in any cause for the promotion of temperance, as is every right-thinking person, and when some system is brought forward in England which will advance the cause of temperance without turning a legitimated trade into illegitimate channels, it will meet a ready supporter than myself; but at the same time I must say I believe in what Lord Salisbury said recently, that public opinion, if allowed to grow, will do the work that legislation is powerless to effect."

BARMAIDS IN ENGLAND.

Their Abolition being Ser-ously Discussed.

A CONTROVERSY is going on in England as to whether barmaids should be abolished in Great Britain and Town writes.

"The supremacy of the barmaid indicates that drinking is a lost art in England. Only the day before yesterday I went into a hotel of considerable reputation and asked for a glass of Chablis. The young lady behind the bar went to another place and produced a champagne bottle, which she energetically shook into a state of frothiness. I remarked that it was not champagne. I wanted, but Chablis, upon which, after a conference with some one in the front bar, she grabbed a bottle of claret from the cooler and poured out a glass thereof. I accepted it without a murmur. It seems to me that the office of dispensing drinks should not be in the hands of irresponsible females, many of whom are only new arrivals from country houses and know nothing of the work which they so willingly adopt."

AMERICAN EXPERIENCES.

"Three years ago I was in New York, when it was made known to me by a bar-tender of a popular saloon near the Manhattan end of the Brooklyn Bridge that the 'boss' purposed importing three English barmaids. The head bartender, who went by the name of 'Billy by the Bridge,' shrank visibly at the intelligence. He was a genius in his way, as many of his fellows are. Who but an American barman, for instance, would have discovered that the piquant juice of lemon juice was nature's own corrective against the rains of the 'morning after?' Billy confided in me, in the idiom of Manhattan he was a 'slandy drink sling-er,' but he was not—as many of his fellows are—a 'nut of culture.' Said he: 'Den I haf dis towled-headed English gals know nothin' only how to pull the handle of a beer engine. S'pose anybody comes in an' asks for a 'Widow's Smiley,' 'A Sweet Recollection,' 'A Corpse Reviver,' 'A Gin Sling,' or even a 'Mint

Julep,' not to speak of such a thing as a 'Poison Cafe,' or an 'Absinthe Frappe,' where are they? Why, they arrived it chanced that one of them was an old Londoner in the second day, for Americans 'said. Billy resigned instantly. During the first day the house was crowded, but it was noticed that every man ordered 'straight' drinks. The force was played out on the second day, for Americans 'save some enough to regulate philanthropy to a proper place—which is not in a drinking saloon—and the British maids returns in kind the blandishments of unknown patrons of her bar! I have seen this unhappy young man many times. He sits apart upon a high stool and glares upon the offending parties. At times when there is a wild lark in his eyes, and then he goes out and buys a cheap pistol, and returning, shoots the girl's ear off. Sometimes he shoots her more fatally, as Josh Billings might have said. At any rate, nobody will deny that had the bar, lately occupied by a male bar-tender, the latter would have been in no danger of revolver bullets. If the barmaid system has failed to gain a grip in America, it has, on the other hand, become such a factor in the degeneration of such of our

ANOTHER ASPECT.

"There is another aspect of the barmaid question which I want you to consider, Mr. Editor. I should like to return to be laid upon the table of the House, or upon your desk, stating the number of crimes of violence perpetrated in connection with the barmaid system. Sad, indeed is the fate of the young man who falls in love with a barmaid in kind the blandishments of unknown patrons of her bar! I have seen this unhappy young man many times. He sits apart upon a high stool and glares upon the offending parties. At times when there is a wild lark in his eyes, and then he goes out and buys a cheap pistol, and returning, shoots the girl's ear off. Sometimes he shoots her more fatally, as Josh Billings might have said. At any rate, nobody will deny that had the bar, lately occupied by a male bar-tender, the latter would have been in no danger of revolver bullets. If the barmaid system has failed to gain a grip in America, it has, on the other hand, become such a factor in the degeneration of such of our

Australian cousins, who dwell in cities, that it is not easy to write calmly on the subject. Sometimes good men marry good barmaids, and live happily ever afterwards. Sometimes this is quite the reverse. Let me, sir, cite one instance of the latter case. It is only one of many.

MARRIED A BARMAID.

"Years ago I knew a fine, handsome young ensign in a regiment of foot. He married a London barmaid, and his father, who was a proud old man, gave him his choice to pension the lady or let her cut off with the proverbial shilling. He elected to be cut off, and he worked as a clerk in London for some years. Twelve years afterwards I accidentally ran across him in Australia. He had just been released from goal, where he had served a term at the instance of his wife for non-attendance. A very little while later I gave evidence of identification at the inquest. He had taken something—I really forget what—in a lonely lodging in Woolloomooloo. This, such as it is, is a perfectly true story, the details are sad. On behalf of the barmaid it might be said that her other occupation at present open to women offers such opportunities of advancement, not even typewriting, telegraphy, canvassing, needlework, or any of these familiar occupations." All I say upon these young ladies for my kind, but I do not look for any relief. The trade is dependent upon her; "Johnny" will not do without her, and she herself will never resign of her own accord.

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