

parties, who are innocent; and its object is not punishment, but reform. Drunkenness is a disease, and the determination to treat it as such is the only rational method. When prohibition fails humanity need not despair when remedial methods are at hand. If a permanent cure is impossible, drunkenness will at least henceforth not be the only disease which no rational attempt to treat is made. Narcomania in which chloral, morphine, chlorodine, sulphonal and other narcotics take the place of spirits is a danger, as well as alcoholism, and as such needs to be guarded against.

It can scarcely be said that the Toronto mayoralty election, in the distribution of votes, was a surprise. There was something in the air that told that Macdonald, if he did not win, would poll a large vote; That he might win was deemed not impossible by his most implacable foes. He was not trusted; against his chief opponent no charges of a serious nature have been proved. Many who almost shuddered to think of the possible success of Macdonald half wished at times that he would succeed. The hope was that he would unearth wrongs in connection with a corporation which had had dealings with the city, a glimpse of which had already been obtained and the desire to discover what is behind was strong enough to hush the voice of prudence in voting for a man not fully trusted. And this was the more astonishing as Macdonald, when he had the chance of making the discovery, sold out to the enemy: a poor security for his future fidelity. But, in fact, he promised to do a great many things which were quite impossible. The time when anyone could have been prosecuted for any wrong doing in connection with the transfer of the Toronto Railway franchise has passed and nothing less than an *ex post facto* law could revive the opportunity. Mr. Macdonald, it is true, said he would, if elected, obtain legislation to get from the railway company the difference between the value of the concern and what was paid for the charter; but he must have known that he could not get legislation to give the city what it has no right to. The bargain with the city was, commercially considered, not a bad one; in fact it was an exceptionally good one, for the time at which it was made. The bad thing was the corruption which accompanied it. The danger to be guarded against is a repetition of that wrong when the term of the contract with the city expires. Meanwhile, what is the company doing? Was its hand felt in the contest of Monday? If so in what form?

POSTAL ARRANGEMENT.

The reduction of the Canadian internal postage from three to two cents is not universally welcomed. From those who stand to profit by the change, thanks to the Postmaster-General are due; others, a much larger number, to whom it is likely to mean loss, say nothing in its praise. Considering the great distances which Canadian mail matter has to be carried, a three cents postage is relatively lower than a penny postage in England. In a small island, swarming with an active, energetic population, the reduced rate did wonders, even from the revenue point of view; here, two-cent postage may increase the number of letters, but it is not likely to do so sufficiently to prevent a loss of revenue. A good rule in Government enterprises is to make them self-sustaining. Until all expenses are returned there is no surplus in the shape of profit. Whether a tax should be added, if the operation be final, ought to depend upon its incidence. If it were proportioned to the ability to pay, equity

would recommend it, though it would not determine whether this particular tax ought to be collected. There is reason to fear that the present reduction of postage will cause a deficit which must be filled by a new tax. If those who benefit by the reduction could be made to pay exclusively no harm would be done, but this is impossible, and we shall have two results from the change; some persons will receive benefits paid for out of the public treasury, and the void thus made in the cash will have to be filled by others who are not specially favored. Here are two forms of injustice, one in the shape of favoritism incidental to the operation of the law, another in the form of payment by those who do not benefit, as a consequence of the exemption of those who do. No one pretends that payment for such services can, in all cases, be exactly adjusted; this is impossible, but a broad line of distinction can be drawn. The sender of many letters gets a premium on his correspondence when they are carried at less than cost, and this premium has to be paid by the drinkers of tea or the users of whatever article the tax is put on to make up the deficiency falls. A thousand men and women will be chagrined for every fifty who are gratified.

The Premier, speaking at Montreal, limits the deficit which the reduction of postage to two cents will occasion, to \$200,000, in amount, and, in time, to two or three years. If this estimate be realized, the act will go far to produce its own justification. The prediction will be remembered whether the hopeful view be realized or not. The post office reform on which Mr. Mulock has entered will cause his administration to be remembered. But there is yet work to be done in the Department, by doing which someone will, one day, win new laurels. The master abuse of the Department is the carrying of an enormous weight of newspapers at the public expense. There is no more reason why people should have newspapers delivered free than anything else necessary to the comfort and convenience of civilized men. If anything is to be carried free the most necessary would have a prior claim; food and fuel would both come before newspapers. The chief defenders of the exemption are the publishers, by whom two pleas are put forward: one in the name of education, the other in the name of religion. There must be some point in the age of man at which state education shall cease; as for religion, Parliament pledged itself to cease to charge itself with the propagation of the peculiar views of any denomination when in secularizing the clergy reserves, it made the declaration that all semblance of connection between Church and State ought to be abolished. The trouble is that the newspapers are powerful, and like other people, are selfish, and no minister likes to brave their opposition. From the economic point of view, one of the most essential things for Canada to do is to put such services at the post office on a self-sustaining basis. This could only be done as a whole; there must be some small post offices that will not pay, but even these should not be unduly increased. The ideal aim should be to make all such services pay, not necessarily a revenue, but their own cost. If this were done in the post office and forced on the newspapers, they would in time acknowledge the justice of the rule, and aid in its extension to other services similarly situated, if such could be found.

We do not object, as some do, to making journals pay the post office for their carriage. But we do object to the empirical way in which it is proposed to discriminate in favor of some local journals by allowing them to select the area which their circulation shall cover. The making of a free zone for a certain class of papers works injustice in this respect, that it frees almost entirely local papers throughout the country, while it imposes nearly the whole