

and Master, in distorting His Holy Word, and depraving His Holy Sacrament ; and because it is an unwarrantable interference with the liberty of the subject. We must rally round this standard ; we must fight prohibition on this issue ; and our battle cry must be as of old :

“PRO ARIS ET FOCIS.”

9. As we began our argument, so would we close it, with the Word of God. But first let us reiterate ; we speak not a word against those who are nobly and self-denyingly striving to reclaim the drunkard and to check the prevalence of this particular sin—we are only resisting those who advocate Coercion. The only “argument,” if such it can be called, which prohibitionists can wrench from the Scriptures is the text : “It is good neither to eat flesh nor drink wine nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth.” (Romans xiv, 21.) It is scarcely worth while to answer such an argument seriously ; one would think that the verse immediately preceding and that immediately following the text were enough to show that such a course as coercive prohibition was the last thing in the apostle’s mind regarding either meats or drinks. Perhaps the best plan to meet such “argument” is the *argumentum ad absurdum* which we borrow from the *Dominion Churchman* of 19th May : “The tongue is an unruly member, and by it untold harm and evil have been wrought ; therefore let us prohibit all speech.”

St. Paul does indeed say : (I Cor. viii. 13,) “If meat make my brother to offend I will eat no flesh while the world standeth ;” but he does *not* add : “And I will see that nobody else shall, and I will agitate to get coercive laws passed to that effect.” The whole drift of the Apostle’s argument in both the chapters, (Rom. xiv and I Cor. viii,) from which the above texts are extracted, is as follows :

1st. To assert, and insist upon, the full and complete liberty of the Christian in the matter of meats and drinks.

2nd. To concede that “weaker brethren” (probably the later converts from Judaism and Idolatry,) would naturally bring with them into the Church the prejudices of their early training : the Jew finding it hard to free himself all at once from the prohibitory enactments as to meats, etc., of the law of Moses and of the “tradition of the elders ;” and the Greek clinging to his old-time habits and superstitions.