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Wyld & Darling Bros.,
TORONTO.

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ENFORCEMENT OF THE DUNKIN ACT.

When the Prohibitionists found they were too weak to obtain a majority in the Dominion Parliament, they set to work to see what they could do in the way of local prohibition, under the Dunkin Act. They have been able to procure the adoption of that act in several counties of Ontario, with the result that, while the sale of liquor is licensed in some places its sale is prohibited in others. In the towns, the greatest degree of resistance to the measure is met. But the movement shows considerable vitality, and it would not be easy at present to predict the limits within which it is likely to be bounded. If Prohibition could show in this way that it counted anything like a majority of the whole population, it would be able to carry Parliament by storm and obtain for itself uncontrolled sway; but whether it will ever be able to do so, it is impossible to judge from present indications.

So long as Prohibition sways only a local sceptre, under the Dunkin Act, it cannot be very effective even where it appears to have control. The prohibition of the sale of liquor must be very incomplete, while importation and manufacture go on. One result would be illicit sales and clandestine drinking; but on the whole there could hardly fail to be a decrease in the whole quantity of liquor consumed. In places where a large majority is in favour of Pro-

hibition, the law will be generally enforced, but where the majority is the other way no sufficient degree of detective power can be expected rigidly to enforce the law.

It is doubtful whether the Dunkin Act can legally be invoked in any Province besides the two that formed Upper and Lower Canada where it was passed, and until this is settled by competent authority, or the Act is specifically extended to the other Provinces, the Prohibitionists will not be able to achieve any practical results outside of Ontario and Quebec. If they were able to enlist the services of the Roman Catholic priests of Lower Canada in the cause, it would do more to ensure the success of prohibition than anything else.

In face of this movement, persons interested in the branches of manufacture and commerce, against which it is aimed, will do well to regard its success as among the possibilities of the future, and act accordingly. It must be a moot question whether equity would not require that, in prohibiting a commerce that has been carried on under the sanction of law, the Legislature should not provide some compensation to those whose fixed capital is made valueless by the change. But that the chances of obtaining compensation are very slender is a fact that must be faced; and in proportion as the movement gathers strength, the inadvisability of increasing the total of such fixed capital cannot fail to impress itself upon those interested. Of the evils of intemperance, unhappily, no one is permitted to doubt; but men will continue to the end of the chapter to differ as to the best means of putting an end to them. Some day the question may be decided by force of a legislative majority.

THE TARIFF DEBATE.

The debate on the tariff changes has not much contributed to the elucidation of the subject. Instead of clearing away the mists that hung over it, the effect seems to have been to increase the obscurity. The small changes which the Minister of Finance deemed it necessary to make, for revenue purposes, did not necessarily involve a discussion of the entire basis of the tariff, on the grounds of Protection and Free Trade. The real objection which naturally arose to the policy of Mr. Cartwright, was that, when he found himself in want of more revenue, he did not select for increased duty some articles which the stimulus of a higher duty would gradually encourage the manufacture of in this country. Therein, in our opinion, lay his error. To ignore the strongly growing desire that this line

of policy should be followed, whenever opportunity offered, is to place the Minister of Finance in antagonism with a phase of public feeling which is daily increasing in strength.

If the question which the proposed tariff changes raised had been met on this ground, Mr. Cartwright's critics would have taken up a stronger position than they did, though it is not probable that there would have been any marked difference in the division list. It is quite possible that the views which political parties in Parliament find themselves obliged, by the conditions of the general warfare in which they are engaged, to adhere to, differ widely from the growing opinions which find freer expression out of doors.

The gage of battle thrown down by the Opposition covered the whole field of Protection and Free Trade. It was not a battle forced on by the tariff resolutions of the Government. It would have been quite possible to discuss the proposed changes, on strictly national grounds, if the contest had been confined to the narrower range which the specific items indicated. A cause is seldom advanced by prematurely exposing it to an overwhelming defeat. What we wish here distinctly to mark is the wide difference between the assertion of a general policy of protection and the desire to take advantage of opportunities, such as offered when the deficiency admonished the Minister of Finance that he must get more revenue, to lay necessary duties in such a way as will tend to stimulate domestic manufactures. The two policies, though they may have something in common, are quite distinct.

So eager were the combatants for battle that they repeated old war cries without stopping to enquire if the words used were wrested from their true and obvious meaning. The distinction between a revenue and a protectionist tariff was not properly defined. The defenders of the existing tariff policy, which had been attacked along the whole line, assumed that 17½ per cent. is a revenue tariff and that twenty per cent. would be protection. There are two senses in which the term revenue tariff may be understood: it may mean the highest tariff which can co-exist with the maximum amount of revenue, or it may mean the highest tariff which the exigencies of the revenue demand. The opponents of a change generally assumed that any increase in the existing scale of duties would be attended with a loss of revenue. This is a point on which there seems to be a strong and unaccountable misconception. A glance at the history of American tariff legislation will show the erroneousness of the assumption.