

But supposing the question is—Shall I be compelled to change all my habits because other people think that an indulgence which I find quite harmless is mischievous? Such is human nature that I verily believe if you passed the Permissive Bill you would make a great many join the Anti-Temperance party out of sheer opposition. Fourthly, you would if you passed this measure effect a tremendous confiscation of property in every place where it was put in force. Now, that is what we never do in this country. It is all very well to say that licences are now only renewable for short periods. Nominally—Yes. Really—No. The retail liquor sellers have got into the position in which they are under an implied guarantee from the nation, acting through Parliament, and you may be very sure that the nation which indemnified the slave-holders, will not give the publicans up to confiscation at the will of a two-thirds majority in this or that district. You must face this difficulty of compensation in any measure that is meant to pass, and the Permissive Bill does not face it. Fifthly, the mere introducing of a new election would be an evil. Sixthly, under the Permissive Bill, only one question can be put to the ratepayers: Will you or will you not stop the sale of intoxicating liquors entirely in this district? Now, there are thousands and tens of thousands of people who would like very much greatly to limit the trade of intoxicating liquors, but who do not see their way to getting rid of it altogether. If a man was willing, in a place where there were 100 public houses, to shut up 89, he would nevertheless have to vote against the Permissive Act being put into force in his district. Can there be anything more absurd than such a method of turning people who want to be friends of the temperance cause into apparent enemies? Lastly, it has become as clear as possible that the country, rather than adopt the Permissive Bill, will let the existing state of things, bad as it is, go on. The country thinks the bill tyrannical, and thinks about it a great many other things to which I have not alluded, because I wish on this occasion to urge merely those arguments which appear strongest to my mind—and it will not have it. For years and years this measure has been before Parliament. Read the division lists of last year and the year before. After all this talk, how many of the men whom the country is accustomed to follow appear in the list of the supporters of the hon. member for Carlisle? He knows, and all others know, that these men are just as good friends to temperance as he is. He would admit it. He has admitted it. To bring it in year after year with the result of such useless discussions as those of the last two years, is like sowing sea-sand. But after all, what magic is there in the name of the Permissive Bill? It is one suggestion