

Are spread o'er the land and sea !
 And would'st thou hack it down ?
 Wood-man forbear thy stroke !
 Cut not its earth bound ties—
 O ! spare that aged oak !
 Now towering to the skies.

When but an idle boy,
 I sought its grateful shade :
 In all their gushing joy,
 There, too, my sisters played.
 My mother kissed here—
 My father pressed my hand—
 Forgive this foolish tear,
 But let that old oak stand !

My heart-strings round thee cling,
 Close as thy bark, old friend !
 Here shall the wild bird sing,
 And still thy branches bend.
 Old tree ! the storm shall brave !
 And, Woodman, leave the spot—
 While I've a hand to save,
 Thy axe shall harm it not.

—*Schenectady Democrat.*

Repository of Contemporary Opinions.

In our last we gave the views of the *London Morning Chronicle* on the Maine Law, with the reply of a contemporary. We are glad to perceive that the subject is attracting attention in other quarters. One of the most independent and trust-worthy of the London Dailies has uttered its opinion with respectful approbation. The Maine Law is approved by the *London Daily News*, which paper speaks in a leading editorial, thus :—

“ It is very interesting to us who sit in old Europe, following old methods of government as a matter of course, to see what can be attempted and done by a people really and immediately self-governing. We may doubt and disapprove of some things done by our Republican brethren across the Atlantic, and think that we should not like this, or that, or the other liability or custom of theirs; but it is to be hoped that we can cordially admit and honor certain occasional achievements of theirs, which are quite beyond anything we can effect or dream of effecting. We really hardly know anything more striking than the history of the rapid abolition of the vice of drunkenness in several of the States of the American Union; and it is with the feelings of the deepest respect that we desire to direct the attention of our countrymen to the action of the State of Maine in regard to that vice. That curse, which is fatal wherever it appears, used to be more deadly in the State of Maine than in many other places. Bordering on our Colonies, and thickly wooded, and in part scantily settled, it has retained a semi-barbarous character, in some respects, to this day. At some seasons, the streets of the towns swarm with a wild addition to the ordinary population—with lumberers from the woods, Irish emigrants, and Indian wanderers. Till last year, these visitations were a subject of dread to the sober inhabitants. By day the streets were hardly safe among so many reeling drunkards; and at night, the reeling drunkards murdered sleep. Last May, when the towns filled with these strangers, all was safe and orderly. The Houses of Correction were nearly empty throughout 1852. There were very few paupers; and such was the state of social peace, that the lawyers had little to do in criminal cases. Such was the immediate result of the Maine Liquor law. What was that law itself the result of? This is the question that interests us; for there can be few or none who would dispute the consequences

of an abolition of intemperance. The doubt is about the possibility of such abolition at all; or otherwise than by the sacrifice of something more important than the benefit to be gained.

The Maine Liquor Law was obtained by the simple determination of the majority to abolish intemperance in the form of drink. They did it through the ballot-box—by electing temperance men to the Legislature. For many years, valuable experience had been accruing. The ordinary temperance movements had been tried there, as elsewhere in the Union; and with the same partial success. The success can never be more than partial where temptation and conflict remain. As long as rum and gin shops stand open, and the smell of spirits is in the air, the weak and wavering will suffer under conflict with temptation, and often fall; physicians will tell in private of the increase of solitary drinking—the worst of all; and the “pledged” will be in a lower state than ever, having added perjury to their first weakness. It appears from experience, that it is a terrible mistake to expect so serious and difficult a process as self-control from such a stimulus as association in a temperance society; and thus it turned out in Maine, as elsewhere. So the Legislature was looked to.”

The Editor then gives a summary view of Maine legislation on the liquor traffic, and then proceeds :—

“ Some may ask here, as many asked there—What more could be done by law than prohibiting the sale? The one thing more that was wanted was the destruction of the liquor: and this is the most striking feature of the new law. The intoxicating liquor wherever found under circumstances which indicate sale, is impounded till the matter is tried; and on the conviction of the sellers, the liquor is poured out upon the ground. Every city and town is required or permitted to appoint annually, through its municipal officers, an agent, who is licensed for the year under responsibility to the magistracy, to sell spirits for the purposes of the mechanical arts and medicine; and, up to this time, it appears that a sufficient supply is obtained for all such purposes by this provision. And in every other way, the law appears to work as well as a prohibitory law ever does, and certainly to the benefit of society within that State. A dram shop may be opened here and there, just outside the boundary line of the State; and a citizen here and there import a cask of spirits, and give away the contents among those who will do him some favor in return: but these are small matters. There is a general purification—the smell is not in the air—the dram shops are not open before the eyes—the temptation does not beset the will—the struggle does not perplex and weary the brain and conscience. The social results are so clear that the example has been followed. Rhode Island has followed in the work in Maine, and so also has Massachusetts, with the exception of Boston, where the municipal authorities, strong invested interests, still hold out. The doubt was, at first, whether a law so stringent could stand—whether the second year would not undo the work of the first. It appears not. Experienced American citizens believe that it would now be impossible to get the law repealed.

The first sentiment of Englishmen on hearing this story seems to be amazement that citizens will submit to such a law. They feel that there would be danger to our liberties if such a law could pass our Parliament and Throne tomorrow. No doubt: but this is because we do not, as a people, desire it. If the Americans were not self-governed, they would rebel sooner than admit of legislation so stringent. But they are self-governed, and therein lies the chief interest of the whole matter. They decreed for themselves first, the universal education which dignified them with drunkenness, and warned them to save the next