

## Liquor Traffic—Ontario.

acquired for the stronger alcoholic drinks, while others say that owing to, the phylloxera having injured the grapes, good wine has been lessened in quantity and increased in price, and the people have substituted other alcoholic drinks for wine. Are you in a position to speak, from investigations you have made, as to what the true state of things is?—I know practically nothing from my own observation, although I made some researches and inquiries during a visit to Bagnères de Bigorre in the south of France. An uncle of mine has been connected with the Department at Calais for forty-five years, and in a conversation I had with him and from some writings that he has favoured me with, I am confident that the cause of the drunkenness in the north of France, especially in some of the manufacturing towns, has been due to just what you have stated—the destruction of the vines. It was almost impossible for three or four years to get vin ordinaire in the ordinary wine shops. In fact, all that was sold was sophisticated. In Paris and in many other parts of France I believe there are a large number of shops where nothing but sophisticated wines are sold to the poorer classes, who cannot afford to buy the more expensive German wines. At the same time, with the destruction of the vines by the phylloxera, the French Government, I believe, added an import on Rhine wines, so that many of the people were forced to take the potato spirit. In Paris the lower class workman drinks absinthe, but he has always done that.

12475a. How about the section of France you visited, in the South?—There, I never knew or heard of any cases of drunkenness. My mother's family are French descended from Italian families, through whom we can trace many generations. In all that time they have had their vineyards and have made wine and drunk wine and given it to their children, almost from the time they have left the breast, and I have never known of any case of drunkenness or intemperance in the family, which is a large one. The same custom is observed in Spain.

12476a. Taking the authorities of recent times, the chemists and medical men, how do they stand in regard to the question of the use of alcohol for beverage purposes?—Ordinary medical men differ very widely. If I were to refer to the recognized authorities, I find that Dr. Hammond, the greatest living authority, since the death of Charcot, on the brain, is unhesitatingly in favour of the moderate use of alcoholic liquors. The same is true of Dr. Bernays, Dr. Alfred Gerod, and in fact any of the great leading authorities. I except one man who is very much quoted, Dr. Richardson. I know of none of them, with the exception of Sir William Gull, who would not say that the moderate general use of fermented drinks is beneficial. Even Sir William Gull makes some admissions. He points out that to the labouring man the glass of beer is not only not harmful, but mostly beneficial, and in the case of the business man he says the glass of claret is undoubtedly beneficial. Dr. Richardson is very largely known simply because of the persistence with which the teetotallers have pushed him forward. I would like to know what rank Dr. Richardson takes as a scientist. He has attained some prominence in connection with the question of the use of chloral hydrate. But some years ago when I was a student in London, I was present at a dinner of the Harveyan Society at which Dr. Richardson made a speech, in which, referring to chloral hydrate, he expressed regret that he had ever anything to do with its introduction into medical practice. A man who could make such a statement as that in the presence of a large number of doctors, all of whom were smiling, could hardly be said to be responsible for his scientific utterances. Again, at the end of my work I have quoted the following statement of Dr. Richardson on the action of the alcohol on the body: "It will be asked: Was there no evidence of any useful service rendered by the agent in the midst of so much obvious evidence of bad service? I answer to that question that there was no such evidence and there is none. It is an agent as potent for evil as it is helpless for good." When a man can make that statement in the face of the utterances of such men as Anstie, Dupré, Thudichum, Charcot, Pasteur, and others of the greatest scientists of the present or the past generation, who are unanimously in favour of the moderate use of alcohol, what importance can be attached to anything else he may say on questions of science.

12477a. Have you had any experience of the working of a prohibitory law?—I have been in Portland, but not for a sufficient length of time to form any opinion from my personal observation.