

"No-License" Conventions are being held all over the country. That held at Foxton on Thursday of last week, resolved that hygiene and scientific temperance instruction should be made a compulsory subject in the primary schools from Standard III. upwards; that the alliance executive be urged to give earnest consideration to the best methods of securing temperance instruction in schools; that the convention expresses pleasure in reference to organisation work done prior to the last licensing pool. At a public meeting held subsequently further resolutions were carried. It was resolved: "That in the opinion of this meeting the power of Dominion option in relation to the granting of liquor licenses should be enacted without delay." "That every issue on the licensing question, local and Dominion, be determined by the majority of those who vote, and that this meeting appeals to the Government and Parliament to secure the early enactment of those popular rights." A resolution was also passed condemning the action of the chairman of the Tauraranui Licensing Committee in giving his deliberate and casting vote in favour of wholesale licenses in the King Country, thus violating a solemn compact between the Government and the Maori people, and also urging the Government to bring the matter before the Supreme Court with a view to quashing the license granted.

WHY IT IS OPPOSED.

A PROHIBITION QUESTION ANSWERED.

An American paper, Detroit "Truth," has the following:— One of the favorite arguments of the prohibitionists, and which they triumphantly bring forward as unanswerable, is the "Why the liquor men oppose prohibition if it does not prohibit?"

Notwithstanding the confidence of the prohibitionists in this argument, a little reflection can readily refute it, and demonstrate that the position of the liquor men is entirely logical.

Even though prohibition fails to prohibit, by its very nature it casts the imputation of illegality on the methods of trade that spring up in its wake and drives the business into hands that will adapt themselves to this illegitimate trade. The liquor men, while they could make as much, if not more, gain than before, naturally do not wish to see their business under a ban, and relegated into the hands of those who are not subjected to regulation or restriction.

As citizens of the community in which they do business, they do not believe in introducing an element that will disrupt society and tend to demoralisation, on the one hand, and to espionage and persecution on the other. They see the manifold evils that ensue where prohibition is attempted, and oppose it on the general ground of the public good, as well as on the ground of interference with their business, which, from being legitimate, is stamped with illegitimacy under the new regime of prohibition.

It is well known, also, that the quality of the liquors vended deteriorate under prohibition, while the quantity rather increases than otherwise, and also the use of deleterious drugs increases, so that the last state of the community is infinitely worse than the first.

All these considerations and many others equally potent influence the liquor men to oppose the introduction of a system which seeks to substitute a legitimate and regulated traffic, by abandoning all regulation and relying on the fiat of a bare majority to alter tastes and habits of a lifetime. They can make even more money under prohibition, but prefer to do business under the aegis of legitimacy.— "Truth," Detroit.

WHAT STATISTICS PROVE.

A SOUTH AFRICAN OBJECT-LESSON.

"You can prove anything from statistics" is a common enough remark, and judging from a blue book recently issued it would also appear (says the Capetown correspondent of the London "Licensed Victuallers' Gazette and Hotel Courier") that you can prove anything from the reports of our Resident Magistrates. Sundry men and sundry newspapers have been drawing conflicting conclusions from some reports on the liquor trade, licensed and otherwise, but one thing only do these reports prove, as I will proceed to state after a few brief extracts from the reports themselves on the working of the very stringent regulations as to the supply of liquor to natives, the natives that are natives, and not the coloured individu-

als with a glaze of civilisation whom we term "Cape Boys."

In the Adeaide district, says the report, the Innes Liquor Act is not in force, but in 1907 only 15 cases of drunkenness were tried and 33 in 1908, which number cannot be taken as excessive considering the number of natives who visit the town. The number of cases of Kaffir beer-making was 22 in 1907 and 16 in 1908. In Albany the Act is in force, and is stated to be working satisfactorily. In Aliwal North there are restrictions, and very few cases of drunkenness have occurred. In Bedford there were only 12 cases last year, but as all convictions refer to drunkenness in public places, the R.M. draws no conclusions as to whether drunkenness is increasing or decreasing, for he considers that the illicit manufacture of beer from prickly pears and from honey goes on to a considerable extent. Drunkenness has decreased, but this the magistrates put down to lack of money as much as to stringent regulations. Considerable facilities are afforded in neighbouring districts, liquor is thus imported from outside and brought into the dwellings, but without resulting in serious crimes. At East London the licensed houses are reported on as well-conducted, and no complaints have been made by the public as to illicit sales. At Glen Grey the great trouble complained of is that natives who are not registered voters get liquor through the intermediary of those that have the franchise. At Hay, where the Licensing Court has not imposed the restrictions on the sale to natives, "strange to say," says the R.M., "there has been little or no drunkenness, and crime has decreased." At Herschel there is much illicit dealing, and it is likely to continue; registered voters can get as much liquor as they like, and do get it in large quantities, probably disposing of part of it to those who have not the privilege of being voters. At Jansenville the restrictions have resulted in very little drunkenness amongst natives, and similar reports come from other isolated districts; in other places larger and more accessible the reverse seems to be the case; in Queenstown, for example, no less than 223 natives were convicted for making or possessing Kaffir beer, but this number was a substantial decrease from former years. In Stellenbosch, a grape district, drunkenness and riotous behaviour is common amongst the natives who are not dependent on the trader for their supply. At Uitenhage the restrictions have not had any good effect, for the registered voter gets the supply for himself and friends, and there is an increase in the illicit brewing of Kaffir beer, Dante, and honey beer. More extracts might be given, although this particular blue book by no means exhausts the whole of the Colony, but one definite conclusion, and one only, can be drawn. That is, the native bent on a drink will get it or will make it, honestly if he can, but get it somehow. And even in the wine districts, where he can beg, borrow or steal liquor, restrictions on the sale of it have made the native no better if no worse. The conclusion that the representatives of the wine farmers will inevitably draw from these reports will be that the natives should be allowed to obtain the produce of their vines in moderation and under proper regulations. Their case is a strong one unless their opponents are prepared to say that the illicit productions are more wholesome than the genuine grape-juice.

"THE STATE A SLEEPING PARTNER."

Whether the Government like the term or not, there is no getting over the fact (says "The Licensed Victuallers' Gazette") that the Trade is already a sleeping partner in the licensed trade. What the Chancellor of the Exchequer wants to do is to take all the profits. He is reminded that through the Trade considerably over a quarter of the total Exchequer receipts from tax revenue is derived. Taking two large London breweries, the London Brewers' Association shows to what extent the State derives revenue through them. These two breweries paid to their debenture, preference, and ordinary shareholders last year the sum of £264,939; they paid in duties to the State £507,000. The proposals of the Finance Bill will increase the share taken by the State by another £100,000. In the Times of June 15th the Chancellor of the Exchequer, speaking to an Irish deputation, is reported as having said that "the monopoly value of English public-houses had gone up enormously during the last few years." The Association points out that this is a serious misapprehension, and they say "there can be no question that the

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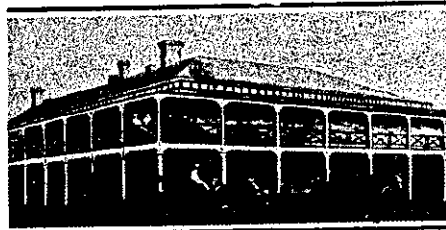
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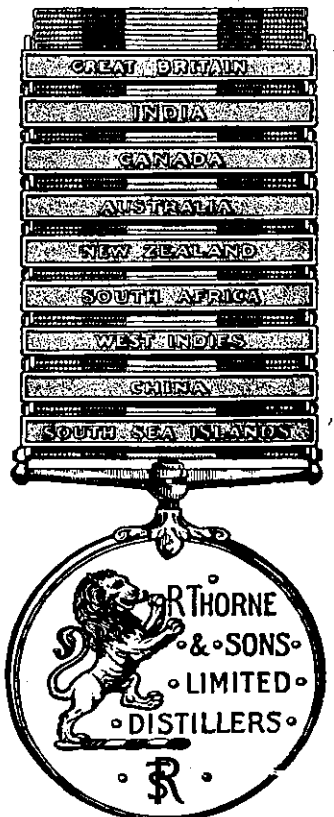
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