

BREWERS' MONEY.

The following appears in the latest English "Brewers' Journal" to hand:—
 "Mr W. G. Finch having written to the Bishop of Winchester, raising the question whether it is right to consecrate a church owing its erection to brewers' money, received the following reply from his Lordship:—

"Farnham Castle, Surrey,
 July 30th, 1902.

"Dear Sir,—If I thought that the production of liquor capable of being an intoxicant was in itself a sin, and that money acquired by means of a business connected with the wine or beer trade was necessarily contaminated and ill-gotten, I should decline knowingly to receive it, however good the object to which the donor desires to allocate it. But as such is not my opinion, I see no reason why men whose incomes are in part derived from such business should not join with others in contributing to the funds raised for promoting moral and religious work in England. The fact that the excessive use of alcoholic liquor is a gigantic curse in this country, and that strenuous efforts are demanded for repressing the evil, does not, in my judgment, lead to the conclusion you appear to deduce from it.

"(Signed) RANDALL WINTON."

We have not the pleasure of knowing who Mr W. G. Finch may be, but at a rough guess we should say that he most probably belongs to the English temperance party. It would hardly have been thought possible that such a point should have been raised in this supposed glorious twentieth century, and it will furnish brewers with a certain amount of grim amusement to know how their money is regarded by some classes of people.

Hitherto a brewer's money had always been considered as good as anybody else's money, but Mr W. G. Finch and his friends have some doubts on the point.

Is it not almost pitiful in the interests of humanity that there are actually living beings supposed to be of the highest order in the animal kingdom, and yet capable of holding such views as entertained by Mr W. G. Finch and his friends. And it is not only in England that these views are expressed, but also in Australia.

If you attend some temperance meetings, you will see people raise their hands in holy horror at the idea of having anything to do with a public house or a brewery. The mere fact of being a relative of a brewer damns a person for ever in their eyes, and if a relative of a brewer or a publican supports temperance principles—that is, the principles held by various extremists—he is looked upon as a brand plucked from the burning.

It is extremely unfortunate for the licensees of an hotel that the translators of the New Testament used the words "publicans" and "pharisees." We feel sure they would have found some substitute if they had only known the trouble and inconvenience to which licensed victuallers in after generations would have been put. Even at the present day there are thousands of people who believe that the "publicans" of the early Christian era kept hotels and laboured under the inconvenience of a Licensing Act; and the youthful advocates of temperance extremes, reading in the Scriptures of the various acts of "publicans," at once store up in their minds a future resentment of licensed victuallers and all their doings, placing them in the same category as the ancient "publicans," and they consider that it is a direct act of toleration on the part of Providence that licensed victuallers are allowed to continue in existence.

Brewers happily do not labour under the same ban, but they do not escape, for they are looked upon as the direct allies of the sinful publicans, and in view of the incident in which the Samaritan figured so creditably, the publican and his ally are looked upon as something worse than misers. The fact that the sufferer was taken, most probably to an hotel, and lodged and boarded, does not exercise any contrary effect.

It is well for the Church of England that there are men of such broad-minded views as the Bishop of Winchester. If his reply had been of a contrary nature, what triumph and rejoicing there would have been in the temperance camp!

But the very idea of a brewer's money being—shall we say—tainted is absolutely ridiculous. Would the money paid by a nation as a war indemnity to its conqueror be considered so? and yet that money is obtained by the sacrifice of human lives and the desolation of thousands of homes. If such money as this were offered to temperance extremists to further their aims, we can hardly conceive that it would be refused. The wealth of many a millionaire has been indirectly obtained by the grinding down of other people, causing poverty, and perhaps crime; but no one blames the millionaire. If a number of people ruin themselves by drunkenness, is the brewer to be blamed? He does not want any drunkenness. He is quite content to carry on his business in an honourable manner, and it is therefore unjust that he should be blamed because

some weak-minded person chooses to lose all self-respect and wallow in liquor as a pig wallows in mud.

As we have stated elsewhere, let temperance advocates educate people to moderation. That is their only chance of success. There is no new doctrine, for if we can believe old inscriptions and papyri, in the year 2000 B.C. Egypt was convulsed by the high-handed proceedings of certain persons in authority, who inclined to the opinion that the hotels in the country were too numerous, and they attempted to establish a local option poll of some kind or other. The ancient electors did not agree, and there was trouble. The same trouble has been going on ever since in some form or other, and most probably will continue going on until the end of the world.

As of old, so in the present day it is the temperance extremists who attack. The brewers and licensed victuallers have always to defend. The latter are content to go on with their business in the ordinary way, but they are not allowed to do so. They are called all sorts of names, and all sort of things are said about them. A temperance lecturer seizes hold of an isolated case of a man ruined by drunkenness, and at once blames it on to the brewer and licensed victualler, but the man himself is never blamed. He is looked upon as the hapless victim, and yet he is the sole cause of all the trouble.—(Australian "Brewers' Journal.")

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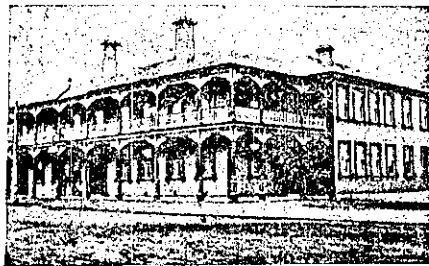
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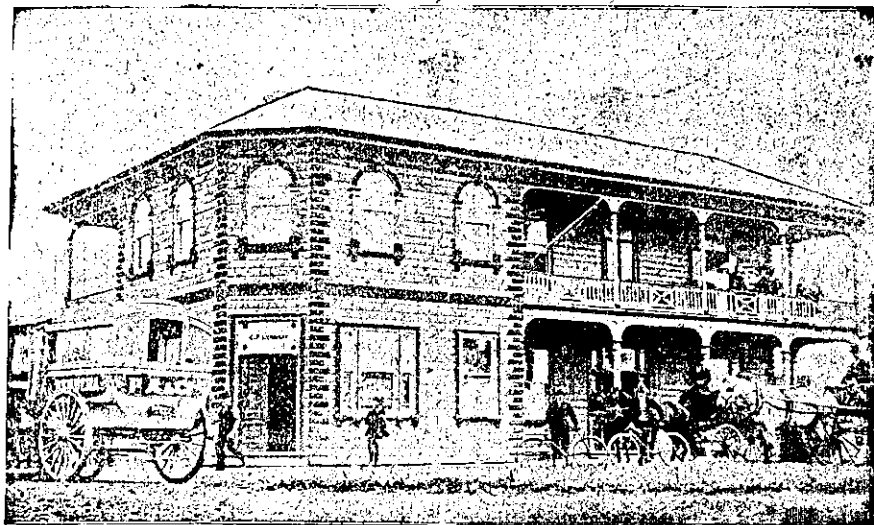


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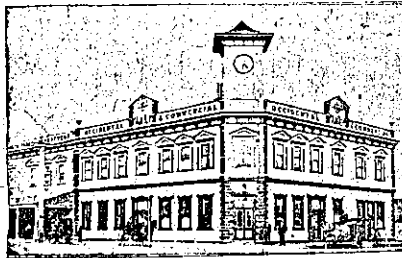


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