

as relates to the colony under your government, in order that it may be laid before Parliament with the returns from other colonies at the commencement of next session, in continuation of the papers previously laid [C. 5563 of 1888, and House of Commons Paper 421 of 1888].

I have, &c.,

KNUTSFORD.

The Officer Administering the Government of New Zealand.

Enclosure.

[Extract from the *Times*, 13th July, 1889.]

THE LIQUOR LAWS IN CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES.

THE Earl of WEMYSS rose to ask the Government whether they would take steps to obtain and lay before Parliament reliable information regarding the present working of the liquor laws in Canada and the United States. He said that his motion had been some time on the Paper, and he was glad of the delay, because it had enabled him to corroborate the facts which he should lay before their lordships. He thought he should be able to prove that prohibitory liquor legislation had been an absolute failure both in Canada and the United States, whether that legislation had taken the form of absolute suppression, local option, or Sunday closing. Two years ago he had ventured to say that in Maine, where there was prohibition, there were more crime, more murders, and more pauperism than in any other portion of the population. He was then taken to task by one of the members for Glasgow, who called upon him to prove his case by statistics. He sent his statistics to that gentleman, and received a reply that, as he was leaving for America, he could not then reply, but would reply on his return. He had, however, heard nothing more from this gentleman. He found that the American Minister fully agreed with him. His Excellency told him that he had known a temperance advocate who had lately died. He asked the doctor what was the cause of death, and the answer was "Intemperance." But it was not intemperance in alcohol, but in hot pickles, which for this gentleman were a substitute for alcohol. In corroboration of the views he had suggested he referred to parliamentary papers, the results of which, he said, were conveniently stated in an article by Professor Goldwin Smith in *Macmillan's Magazine*. The facts there stated showed that in those parts of Canada and the United States of America where they had been tried prohibition laws had not only altogether failed in their object, but had produced other evils besides, for in evading the law the people resorted to all sorts of deceit and perjury. In our own country the same things took place. The hotels in Leeds had been watched on Sundays at the time when only *bona fide* travellers should have visited them, and it was found that an average of 280 persons visited each hotel, only a very small number of whom could have been *bona fide* travellers. In Glasgow there were four thousand shebeens and two thousand clubs. Lord Aberdare, who was one of the keenest advocates of temperance legislation, had admitted that Sunday closing had increased Sunday drinking, and that moral mischief had resulted from that legislation. He could hardly believe that those who now sat on the Treasury bench would think it was a crime to drink a glass of beer, or that all the crime in the country resulted from the liquor traffic. The Lords' Committee on Intemperance laid down a most admirable doctrine on this point, and if the Government followed in the spirit of the report of that Committee they would be doing good service. The question of drunkenness was no doubt important, but there was a still more serious question than drunkenness in this legislation—the question of liberty and the question of law; and nothing would be more injurious to the moral character of the people than to pass a prohibitory liquor Bill, which would, in the long run, tend to produce contempt for the law. He therefore hoped that when these liquor questions came before Parliament the Government, warned by the experience of all English-speaking races, would resist the tyrannical views and actions of those who were in favour of prohibiting the liquor traffic. On these grounds, he hoped the Government would deal with this question courageously, and he begged to put the question standing in his name.

The Marquis of SALISBURY.—The only objection I know to the demand of my noble friend that the Government should furnish him with more information is, that he has so much information already that I am not sure we could give him any material to his purpose. We have already a good deal of information on the table, and we will do what we can to obtain from the American States any further light upon this debatable question. I am authorised by Lord Knutsford to say that he will take the same measures with regard to Canada. My noble friend must remember, however, that at the beginning of the operation of a law, when it has not been in operation for a great length of time it is not easy to produce in the form of statistical figures evidence of its actual working. It is only when it has been in operation for a considerable number of years that the evidence takes that form, and any evidence which really depends on the estimate formed by the reporter is of less value, and, in the case of a foreign State, is rather difficult to furnish. It is quite a simple affair to ask the secretaries of the Embassies in any foreign State to give any facts they know, but it is not so easy to ask them what they think of the working of the law, because they might say something that the Government to which they are accredited may very fairly take exception. Therefore I must ask my noble friend not to imagine that there is a larger store of information at their disposal than actually exists, but I can assure him we will do our best to obtain all we can, and shall be very glad to lay it on the table.

The Earl of WEMYSS asked that the information might be in continuation of the paper already presented to Parliament.

The Marquis of SALISBURY.—Quite so; that will be easily done. My noble friend dealt a good deal with movements of opinion, and addressed many exhortations to the Government or to any persons who might occupy our place; but he knows very well what the opinions of the Government