

GRACIOUS INDULT

FROM

THE SOVEREIGN PONTIFF

TO THE

CATHOLICS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

His Grace the Archbishop of Wellington has received the following letter from the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster:—

Archbishop's House,
Westminster, London,
23rd April, 1902.

MY LORD ARCHBISHOP,—

I have the honor to forward a copy of the *Letter* from the Cardinal Secretary of State, in which I am informed of the gracious act by which the Holy Father is pleased '*motu proprio*,' to dispense Catholics throughout the British Empire from the law of abstinence on Friday, the 27th June, and from fasting and abstinence on Saturday, the 28th June, which is the Vigil of SS. Peter and Paul, in order that they may the more easily join in the festivities with which the week of their Majesties' Coronation will be celebrated throughout the Empire.

But the Holy Father desires that those who avail themselves of this benign dispensation should offer up instead some special prayers. Let all, therefore, on each of these two days recite either one of the Hymns to the Holy Ghost, and the Acts of Faith, Hope, Charity and Contrition; or at least five 'Paters,' 'Aves,' and 'Glorias,' to implore the Divine Blessing upon their august Majesties and upon the whole Empire.

I shall be grateful if your Grace will kindly transmit this information to your Suffragans for promulgation in their respective dioceses.

Believe me to be

Your Grace's faithful and devoted servant in Jesus Christ,

✠ HERBERT CARDINAL VAUGHAN,

Archbishop of Westminster.

Notes

Drastic Liquor Laws.

In the minds of most people who read only the current popular literature of the day, Chili, like most of the other states of South America, is associated chiefly with revolutions. It will therefore come as a surprise to many to learn that in Chili there has recently been brought into effect a liquor law that for stringency far exceeds the law of New Zealand, and comes as near as possible to the ideal set up by State socialists, though of course it stops far short of the prevention aimed at by the prohibitionists. The law begins with the breweries and distilleries. Permission must be given by the authorities to carry on these. Inspectors examine, and chemists analyse the products, and failure to meet the required standard of purity entails forfeiture. The door is also vigorously closed against the sale of compounds under the guise of intoxicants, as their importation and manufacture are forbidden.

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The licenses for the retail sale of liquor are sold by public auction every year, and the number issued bears a fixed relation to the population according to its extent and character. An upset price is fixed at the sale of licenses, and this ranges from 1200dol. to 75dol. annually. This method has at all events one feature that makes for equity to a greater degree than the law in New Zealand and elsewhere. In this Colony the public house license costs a certain sum, whether the house licensed be merely a beer shop or a palatial hotel. From a superficial aspect this seems quite inequitable, and the Chilian system at all events yields to the State the enhanced value elsewhere gained by the lucky owner of a thriving place of public entertainment. Three classes of bidders are given the preference—the highest bidder, the bid of a temperance society, a bidder who has not been convicted of any infraction of the law during the twelve months preceding. The list of persons who may

not hold a license is quite a formidable one. It includes members of Congress, governors of any of the twenty-two provinces, mayors of cities, members of the city government, policemen municipal employees, judges, and all persons who had been convicted of any crime. Special provision has been made for hotels (as distinguished from public houses) and clubs, which up to a certain number are exempt from purchase by auction, and they have certain sections set apart for the sale of liquor under special restrictions, or where it shall not be sold at all.

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The tavern frequented by the rural Chilian must be closed at sunset, and remain so until sunrise, but in a tropical and equatorial country this restriction is small. In the cities the houses remain open till midnight, when they are shut till six o'clock in the morning. Premises may not be licensed within 200 yards of any church, school, charitable institution, gaol, or barracks. It is not permitted to advertise any distilled or fermented liquor in any place of public diversion, nor on railway stations or trains. Aesthetic frequenters of Chilian theatres, therefore, enjoy immunity from passionate appeals on the drop scene to try So and So's whisky, while railway travellers are free from the reiteration of the allegation that the wine manufactured by Such and Such defies competition. Who knows but this may be the thin end of the wedge, and that amenities societies in the Old World may yet quote Chili as a land that has abolished the hoarding and frowns upon the desecration of mountain sides by glaring advertisements?

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The penal part of the law is equally stringent with the others. The judicial procedure is simplicity itself. Offences are tried summarily, and the judge hears the witnesses verbally, not more than six on each side, nor can the case be extended (or remanded) for more than ten days. Some of these provisions might be copied with advantage, even in New Zealand. In this regard also, it may be pointed out that in Chili drunkenness is recognised as a crime, and provision is made for the punishment of any person found under the influence of intoxicants in any public place, by fine or imprisonment. In many cases the magistrate must inflict the maximum penalty for drunkenness. Among such are those of policemen, even when off duty, drivers of public vehicles, etc. Nor are persons convicted under the Act considered to be 'first class misdemeanants.' It is expressly stipulated that when any person is sent to gaol, as a penalty imposed for violation of the liquor law he shall in all cases be required to do the same work as other prisoners; and convictions are to be given the utmost publicity. From the foregoing necessarily brief sketch of the Chilian liquor law it may be conceded without hesitation that it does not err on the side of leniency, and may be commended for study by those who would surround the sale of liquor with stringent provisions. Chili has at least attempted to do that which many declare to be impossible—make men sober by Act of Parliament.

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The African Field for Labor.

We read that an exodus for South Africa has set in from Australia since the conclusion of the war. It may therefore be presumed, though we have not observed any official intimation of the fact, that the restrictions imposed during the currency of martial law have been or are about to be repealed. It is in the highest degree necessary that great caution should be exercised in the matter of emigration to Africa. Mere thews and sinews are of little value in a country where black labor is abundant, and consequently cheap. We have seen it stated through an American channel that it is expected that by the end of the next five years there will be 17,000 stamps working in the Randfontein and Geduld mines, as compared with 6000 at the outbreak of hostilities and less than 2000 now. This of course implies a very large annual expenditure (it has been estimated at fully \$35,000,000) of which a large proportion must go to foreign manufacturers for imported supplies of various kinds. It also implies a considerable expenditure on skilled labor, which we conceive will be the only kind required there. From the nature of things, there can be no opening for unskilled labor in South Africa. Manual work in the mines and on the farms will be done exclusively by the natives, who are engaged under conditions and for wages that make white competition impossible. Skilled oversight there must be of course, and for artisans of different kinds there may be many openings, but even for these the conditions are not especially favourable. Even before the war though wages were high, living was much higher, and the margin left out of wages over the cost of maintenance was much less proportionately than in, say, New Zealand. No doubt a wave of renewed activity will sweep over the land now that peace is restored, and this will create openings for the adventurous and enterprising. But the same amount of enterprise would win a greater reward in any of the Colonies, where it must not by any means be supposed that room for enterprise no longer