

out by the British foreign office, shows the laws in force in Switzerland and the rigidity with which they are administered. According to this report the legislative measures are directed in the first place towards the suppression of the vice itself, while they deal with the regulation of the liquor traffic only as a secondary matter. The saloons are severely taxed and subject to restrictions, but the strong arm of the law falls most heavily on the drunkard and on every person who aids him in his vice. Anyone who drinks to excess is liable to fine and imprisonment, and in some cantons he may be confined for an indefinite period in "homes" established for inebriates. Liquor dealers are liable to severe punishment for selling to minors and to intoxicated persons, or even to individuals known to be in the habit of drinking too much.

Persons convicted of drunkenness are in some cantons prohibited from entering a saloon and the proprietor is liable to a fine if he permits them to remain. Fathers of families, known to be poor, are punished if they enter a saloon, and in Berne the law is that any person who helps a pauper to drink or gamble may be imprisoned for sixty days, and no one convicted of drunkenness can lawfully enter a place where liquor is sold for a period of two years from the date of his conviction and sentence. Any appearance in public of an intoxicated person is generally followed by the arrest of the offender.

It is claimed that these severe strictures have had a most beneficial effect on the public morals in the Swiss republic and some have advocated the adoption of similar measures in other countries. The general principles on which they rest are the same as those on which most laws against drunkenness are framed; if the results are not equally satisfactory in other places, the difference must depend on the way in which those laws are administered. The Swiss people, although enjoying the benefits of a republican form of government has been trained to submission under the strong arm of the law to a marked degree. From the days of the severe reformer, Zwingli, when public flogging was the penalty of habitual neglect of attending church on Sundays, to the present day of militarism and police regulations, when even the Christmas joy of the little ones is marred by the presence on the Christmas tree of a formidable looking rod, the people have been inspired with the awe necessary for the enforcement of rigid measures. In the absence of such education the administration of unusually severe laws must necessarily be defective, since there are numerous ways in which any law can be evaded by those so disposed. And it is beyond question preferable to restrict the enactment of laws to such measures as can be administered to the very letter, rather than to multiply laws, to remain dead letters except in particular cases.

The Gothenburg system is the opposite to the Swiss method of warfare against drunkenness. It deals almost entirely with the regulation of the sale of intoxicants. It minimizes the opportunities for indulging in drink and deprives the dealers of any motive for violating the

law, by fixing their salary and making it independent of the amount of business transacted. It also gives back to the community a part of the money earned, by yearly donations to public improvements and benevolent institutions, and it is founded on philanthropic principles. For these reasons many have recommended it as superior to any other method.

Probably the regulations of Switzerland are most practical to that republic, while other measures will have to be taken in other countries. One rule cannot be applied everywhere. Nations have their peculiarities, not to be overlooked in the efforts of lawmakers and philanthropists to conquer vice.

### SHOULD BE DEFEATED.

There is a touch of sentimentality in the announcement that Colonel Breckinridge has confessed his shortcomings to the church with which he is associated and that his co-religionists have voted to forgive him. Of course they could do nothing less, provided they were satisfied in their own mind that his confession and expressed determination of leading a better life were made in good faith. Religion requires this as a duty men owe to each other. The return of the prodigal is the occasion of rejoicing in the household of the father and the recovery of the lost sheep is a pleasing event to the faithful shepherd. To refuse forgiveness to a repentant sinner would be to adopt a course opposite to that commanded by the Christian religion and exemplified in the conduct of its prominent followers in all ages.

It cannot be denied, however, that the close connection between this effort to regain the confidence of the church people and the political campaign into which the colonel has thrown his powerful energy and glittering eloquence, has anything but the right color on the surface of it. He has in this matter laid himself open to the suspicion that his seat in Congress is as important to him as the square settlement of his moral account on a Christian basis. It will always be an open question whether his repentance was not after all one of the ordeals submitted to for purely political purposes. Even those unwilling to constitute themselves judges of the hearts and secret motives of men will find it difficult to dismiss thoughts of this kind, and it is hard to see how his public career can retain any elements of usefulness as long as this suspicion of hypocrisy clings to his reputation.

As a general rule it is understood that the place of men like Breckinridge is not in the front ranks of a great and free nation. No country can afford to entrust the framing or the execution of its laws to men not of the highest excellence. If the representatives of a people are not men of tested moral qualities, the cause of public morality is lost. And the inevitable conclusion of this is, that when a man has been tried and failed as miserably as the Kentucky colonel has done, he ought to retire modestly from public life, with an apology to the country that he ever undertook a responsibility so heavy for his frail shoulders. Even when the charitable view is taken of his case, that his failings were

entirely due to the weakness of his character and not to villainy, he ought to see that such weakness makes him unfit for the exalted position for which he now is making a fight. What is there to guarantee that in a moment of temptation he may not again fall, causing the shadow of scandal to darken his own path and the reputation of the august body of which he is a member?

It would be an act of friendship to the famous gentleman and an act of justice to the country to defeat him in this race. True repentance creates humility, and this feeling would long ago have suggested the propriety of his taking a back seat in the political conventions. To push himself forward, as he has done, after the sorry spectacle presented to the country, evinces bad taste and disregard of propriety to an extreme degree seldom witnessed among the ranks of public men.

### SOLUTION OF THE SEWAGE PROBLEM.

The problem of an effective disposal of sewage on scientific principles that are within the reach of practical application has been long and deeply studied by those specially interested in methods of sanitation. Many plans have been suggested to accomplish the desired object, and the practical application of these suggestions has caused the expenditure of vast sums of the public money, in most instances without obtaining even an ordinarily satisfactory result. Thus the problem of sewage disposal has been regarded as a growing one, especially in its relation to the defiling of the water supply, and its investigation has been and is a matter of grave study as its existence has been an item of serious concern.

Cities that have adopted a sewage system generally are in the position that they must stay by it because of the enormous expense and inconvenience of change, particularly of a radical nature. But those cities which have not yet adopted or fully completed their sewage system exhibit wisdom in seeking the latest suggestions that have received through practical demonstration a satisfactory endorsement of their utility. For the perfect handling of the subject, however, in a way to reach permanent and satisfying results, it should receive scientific study and treatment, to be demonstrated by actual experience. Such a procedure the eminent sanitary engineer, Mr. Waring, has sought to follow, and his article in the last issue of the *Century* would lead people to suppose that he had at last reached the great object of his long and tireless search—the cheap and effective disposal of sewage by simple scientific or natural rules.

The gentleman's conclusions are of great value to growing towns and cities that are about to enter upon extensive public improvements in the line treated of. As Salt Lake belongs to this class, Mr. Waring's investigations and demonstrations should be of deep interest and great value to the municipal administration and the citizens generally. The conclusion of his inquiry, like that of the most prominent of sanitarians of modern times, is that complete oxida-