

yet in this tropic region the evaporation from the Caribbean sea is very great, fully as much at St. Croix as at St. Thomas but twenty miles away.

"It is also well known to farmers that summer showers, so necessary for agricultural prosperity, follow the course of timber-margined streams.

"Among the railroads which are now experimenting with catalpa trees and have planted from 10,000 to 200,000 of the trees as a test, I might mention the Pennsylvania, the Memphis, the Rio Grande Western, the West Virginia Central and Pittsburg, the Boston and Main and the Big Four.

"Railroads are interested in catalpa tree culture, because catalpa wood makes excellent ties, and ties are becoming scarce. A catalpa tree 12 years old makes one tie, 16 years old makes three ties, 20 years old makes five ties. Ties are now worth about 50 cents apiece, and ten to fifteen years from now are likely to be worth double that amount. The supply of ties is very limited.

"The Santa Fe road has not taken any action in this matter, because President Ripley is opposed to the plan. Every other official is favorable to it, but President Ripley thinks it is the exclusive business of the road to attend to transportation matters, and look to other sources for its supplies of ties and such material. The Rock Island road has as yet done nothing, but it is holding the matter under consideration. The Denver road, I am encouraged to believe, will plant a large number of trees."

#### FREE SEED DISTRIBUTION.

We reproduce the following House Bill, with the hope that it may "set some people a-thinking:"

Sixtieth congress, 1st session. H. R. 4-11-44.

In the House of Representatives, 33d of December, 1901.

Mr. Squash introduced the following bill: A Bill for the absorption by the General Government of all seed firms in the United States.

Be it enacted by the senate and house of representatives for the United States of America in congress assembled,

That in view of the insufficient volume of the 47 millions of seed packets to be distributed during the spring of 1902, the quantity, which, under the demand for free seeds has risen from the original half million packets to the volume above indicated, shall at once be further increased to 100 millions and to be better able to carry out the intended distribution the Secretary of Agriculture is authorized and empowered to purchase the stock, good will and fixtures of every seed house in the United States.

The Secretary is further authorized and empowered to purchase every seed firm which may be hereafter established, that there may be carried out the full intent of congress, to wit,

that the seed trade of the United States, as now partially conducted under private incentive, shall by government be absolutely absorbed, and as a private business be destroyed now and forever, the Department of Agriculture being finally charged with the conduct of this particular line of commerce, as an initial step for more extended absorption of many other commercial and manufacturing pursuits, the produce of which the free and independent citizens of the greatest nation in all creation should have free of charge.

If the seed establishments decline to dispose of their business, the Secretary of Agriculture is empowered to stop them by injunction, so that to the government alone shall be entrusted the distribution of garden "sass."

#### THE LIQUOR TRAFFIC.

The W. C. T. U. are the leaders in the work being done to prevent the drink habit and the manufacture and sale of liquor and they have the assistance of every organization for good in the country. All the churches with their auxiliaries, and thousands outside of the churches, are lending their aid to stamp out the liquor traffic. There is no way of estimating the amount of good accomplished by these organizations and workers, but it is undoubtedly of vast proportions; but when it is considered that there is more liquor manufactured and sold today than ever before, there is some reason for the belief that their plan of work is not what it should be.

The workers in these organizations are usually termed "temperance workers," but there is not one of them that would tolerate the idea of a man being temperate in his drink habits, or acknowledge that he had any moral right to take a drink of liquor. While it may be morally wrong to indulge in alcoholic beverages, there is no way of convincing the masses of this fact. They believe the wrong is, not in the use of liquor, but in using it to excess, and they have examples every day to prove this. If there was no drunkenness from the use of liquor, there would be no reason to prevent the use of it, as it is always the man that becomes intoxicated that commits the crime, causes the misery, sorrow, etc.

All suicides are foolish, but all foolish people are not suicides. All drunkards are drinkers, but all drinkers are not drunkards. Prevent the excessive use of liquor and it will cease to be a curse to humanity. Commence a crusade against drunkenness and you will receive the assistance of every self respecting citizen in the country, which can never be hoped for under the total abstinence plan. No matter how much a man drinks, he is disgusted at the sight of a drunken man and would be willing to assist any organization to prevent drunkenness.

The railroads of the country are preventing drunkenness among their employees by making it a crime to be drunk. They do not prevent their employees from taking a drink for the reason they may drink and no one know it, but if they get drunk, everybody will know it.

It may be said that punishment will not prevent the toper from getting drunk, neither does hanging or penitentiary life prevent murder and robbery but it keeps it at a minimum.

Thousands become intoxicated that are in no way toppers or slaves to the liquor habit. They are simply victims of circumstances, or trying to be a good fellow, and if it was a crime to be drunk, it would not be necessary for a man to over-indulge to be considered a good fellow. The social man would not insist on his friend having another on him. If a man never drinks enough to cause drunkenness, he would never be a toper or a slave to the habit.

It would be considered a foolish plan to undertake to remove the water or a bridge from a river to prevent suicide by jumping and drowning, or to undertake to prevent murder and robbery by preventing the manufacture and sale of firearms or other instruments used by criminals.

If the efforts now made to prevent the manufacture and sale of liquor were used to prevent the excessive use of liquor, either by compulsion or moral swasion, the result would undoubtedly be very gratifying to all.

The manufacture of liquor can never be prohibited for the reason it is a product of nature, and if there was no beer or whiskey manufactured, the home-made wine and hard cider would serve as a substitute.

The saloons are here to stay and why not make them respectable, or at least try it. Surely more good can be accomplished by endeavoring to improve the moral condition of the saloon, than by running them down, for they are at the bottom now and as long as they cannot be exterminated they should be improved.

A. J. EWING.

#### LOWER PRICES TO FOREIGNERS.

In response to inquiries on the part of the National Industrial Commission, American manufacturers, who sell their products abroad at less prices than at home, have given their reasons for so doing. The reasons assigned are as follows:

"To meet foreign competition.

"To work off surplus product.

"To secure foreign trade and then establish a permanent market.

"Because the foreigner is required to pay cash, while the domestic buyer demands and secures long time and credit.

"To offset foreign duties.

"To offset freight and transportation charges, which the foreigner must pay.

"To drawbacks or rebates in duties on imported raw material.

"To difference in cost of selling—that is, the elimination of commission to agents.

"To reduce the percentage of fixed charges per single article.

"Because of the fluctuation of the home market, while the foreign market is uniformly more stable."

It will be perceived that these reasons cover a wide range. In some cases it is intimated that, owing to changed conditions, the abatement in price is more apparent than real, such as selling for cash, saving in commissions and return of the drawback on imported raw material. In meeting foreign competition, working off surplus and offsetting duties and freight rates it is assumed that the seller actually sacrifices part of the profit made in the home market.

Manufacturers who, by a protective tariff, are practically licensed to make sales of their products to American consumers at higher prices than the foreign article could be procured for if on the free list are not dealing justly by