

## GROCERS' LICENSES IN TORONTO.

On Tuesday evening a mass-meeting was held in St. Andrews' Hall, Toronto, to discuss the question of Grocers' Licenses. The meeting was presided over by His Worship Mayor Boswell, in response to a requisition from a large number of ratepayers. Notwithstanding that the evening was wet, the large hall was literary packed, so that many of the audience were compelled to stand. A number of ladies were present. On the platform beside the Mayor were Ald. Ryan, Ald. Hall, Rev. Messrs. J. M. Cameron, R. Wallace, H. Melville, T. W. Campbell and Messrs. W. H. Howland, N. W. Hoyles, A. Farley, H. E. Hamilton, W. H. Orr, J. Spence, W. Mann, Geo. Flint, I. Wardell, J. French, J. Thomson, F. S. Spence, and a number of other prominent citizens.

THE MAYOR read the requisition, stated the object of the meeting, and invited those who wished to take part in it to come upon the platform.

MR. W. H. HOWLAND moved the following resolution:

"That whereas experience has shown the sale of liquor in grocery stores to be a prolific source of intemperance, and consequently of poverty and destitution; and whereas the growth of public opinion, as shown by the Dominion License Act passed at the last session of the Dominion Parliament, calls for the separation of the sale of liquors from the sale of groceries or any other merchandise; and whereas the Ontario Liquor License Act, commonly known as the Crooks Act, provides that the Council of every city, town, village, or township may by by-law, to be passed before March the first, in any year, require the shop-keepers to confine the business of his shop solely and exclusively to the keeping and selling of liquor; therefore resolved, that this meeting requests the incoming Council to pass such a by-law according to the terms of the Crooks Act, and that this resolution be forwarded to the City Clerk, to be by him presented to the City Council for 1884."

The speaker did not have any intention of denouncing individuals engaged in a law-sanctioned business. Temperance men recognized the rights of licensed grocers, but they felt it their duty as citizens to work for the abolition of grocers' license. He did not wish to offend any one, but it was a burning question, and when it was struck sparks would fly. He called attention to some of the evil results of the giving license system. It identified with the liquor business a large number of active, influential men whose energies were thus diverted from more useful business, and engaged in

## EXTENDING THE LIQUOR TRAFFIC.

It identified the liquor business with a respectable trade, and so had a tendency to mislead people into thinking the former less evil than it really is. The sale of liquor in groceries was also the means of introducing

## DRINKING INTO HOMES.

The wife and mother went to the store for groceries and was too often led to bring home whisky as well. She would not have done this if there had not been liquor in the store. Some store-keepers gave their customers liquor and so did immense mischief. Much female intemperance was done by drink being sold in shops. He read extracts from an English paper, showing the terrible state of this evil there, and that the people are determined to suppress it. He showed that it led to

## DRINKING AMONG CHILDREN,

and mentioned some facts that had come under his own observation making this indisputable. The liquor business in taverns was watched and inspected, but in grocery stores it was practical

## FREE TRADE IN DRINK,

and seldom interfered with or inspected by officials. He considered that singling out some grocers for the purpose of conferring on them a special privilege in regard to the sale of any commodity, and

## CONTRARY TO ALL FAIRNESS

and justice. Liquor had made some parts of Toronto fully as horrible as the "horrible London" of which we heard so much, and he pleaded with his audience to support this movement upon grounds of justice and humanity.

MR. GEO. FLINT seconded the motion. He knew a good deal about the matter and about municipal councils. They ought to act very decidedly with aldermanic candidates. "No grog in groceries" ought to be the cry of all temperance men. They should pledge every would-be councillor to vote for this.

Liquor-selling groceries were the

## NURSERIES OF DRUNKENNESS.

They were half-and-half sort of institution. They had a right business associated with a wrong one, and this made the people think the latter half-right too. Liquor selling grocers did not even keep the law such as it is that prevents them to sell. He wanted these two businesses torn asunder. This could be done at the municipal elections.

THE MAYOR read a resolution passed on Monday evening by the St. Stephens' C. E. T. S. in favor of the movement that was being advocated.

MR. N. W. HOYLES represented the Church of England Temperance Society and strongly endorsed the resolution. The C. E. T. S. admitted

to its membership total abstainers and those who used liquor moderately, but all could unite for the abolition of this form of the liquor-traffic. It brought liquor into the homes, made inebriates of mothers, and

## POISONED THE PROSPECTS

of the coming generation. He called attention to the fact that next year this city would hold a semi-centennial celebration; and said that abolishing grocers' licenses would be the grandest thing the citizens could do in honor of that event, and the success of this movement would be worthy of being written in letters of gold in Toronto's Memorial volume. He believed a majority of licensed grocers would themselves favor the movement, and he urged the pledging to its support of municipal candidates.

REV. J. M. CAMERON gave some instances of the evil done by grocers' licenses. He pleaded on behalf of families and homes. He knew that many liquor-selling grocers would be glad of the change. His own wife, in company with other ladies, had visited the different liquor stores all along Queen-street, from Yonge to the Don, had put the matter before them, and in every case the grocer was willing to give up the sale of liquor if the other grocers were obliged to do the same. He pointed to other wise legal provisions for the protection of our homes and urged the adoption of this as well.

THE MAYOR asked if there was any one to speak in opposition to the motion, and as there was no response he put the question to the meeting. It was carried unanimously by a standing vote amid loud applause.

ALD. RYAN stated that he had earnestly endeavored to have the by-law asked for carried in the Council in the early part of the present year, but he was balked by a difficulty that still exists. The act requires the by-law to be passed between the first day of January and the first day of March. Now it was almost impossible to get a bill introduced and put through the Council in so short a time. If all the Council favored the measure it could be done, but there was no chance of finding the whole Council in favor of it. When he tried to get the matter pushed through some aldermen introduced a resolution referring the matter to a prominent lawyer for advice as to the constitutionality of the Act. This opinion was never asked for, and the whole thing was a miserable and cowardly way of shirking a square vote on the question. He wanted provision made against future efforts being balked by delay and he therefore moved

"That this meeting requests the Provincial Government to amend the License Act so as to empower the municipal corporations to prohibit the sale of intoxicating liquors in grocery stores at any period of the year."

ALD. HALL seconded the resolution. He had endeavored to assist Mr. Ryan before and he knew how he had been balked. He spoke of the difficulty of resisting the strong pressure that was brought to bear upon the council. He said that the sympathy and assistance of the Mayor would aid them very much in an effort to pass the by-law, and he hoped his Worship would be impressed with the strongly expressed feeling of this meeting.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

THE MAYOR read the following dispatch just received from the Salvation Army:

"The Salvation Army, now assembled in their barracks this evening, forward to you the following resolution:—We, the Salvation Army of Toronto, do in a solid block, without one dissenting voice, say amen in three volleys for the separation of the sale or distribution of intoxicating liquors from grocery stores."

MR. F. S. SPENCE moved the following resolution:

"That this meeting respectfully request the electors of this city to cast their ballots at the coming municipal election in favour of those candidates who will vote for the passage of the by-law if elected."

He congratulated the people of Toronto upon this magnificent meeting. The grocery license system was a miserable failure. It was an attempt to respectabilize the liquor traffic, and that traffic could not be respectabilized. The Dominion License Act abolishes grocers' licenses, the Crooks Act allows the Municipal Council to abolish them. We want to have our Council do this, and then we will be sure of our point, no matter which act is upheld. Public opinion denounces the system. The Dominion Act embodied this opinion. It said "the whole liquor traffic is a criminal that must be guarded, fettered and inspected, but this particular branch of it is a scoundrel that must be throttled by gallows' rope of legislative abolition." To combine liquor-selling and grocers selling was unfair to the grocery trade, unjust to individual grocers, insulting to temperance men, dangerous to the pure minded and cruel to the reformed man.

The polls was the place to fight the battles, elect not only pledged men, but reliable men. If this great meeting came out in its strength it could sway the municipal elections.

MR. A. FARLEY seconded this motion. He knew how hard it was for grocers who did not sell liquor to compete with those who sold it. He had been a grocer, and he knew how his own business had suffered on this account. He knew, too, how much evil this sale resulted in. He had long been an ardent temperance worker, but these grocers' licenses stood in the way of successful temperance work. He asked for the carrying out of this resolution at the polls.

The resolution was adopted unanimously.

MR. H. E. HAMILTON, License Commissioner, moved, "That this meeting is of opinion that it is the duty of the Provincial Government to