

## Public Opinion.

## THE SENATE AND THE SCOTT ACT.

In a considerable majority of the counties of the Dominion the Scott Act law is and will be for some time a subject for heated discussion. The Senate has torn to pieces a bill containing a number of necessary amendments to that law, very much as a pup does with some stray piece of clothing which may fall into his power and of the value of which he has no notion. This proceeding will probably afford a most fruitful topic of reprehension at village gatherings everywhere. Every failure in the enforcement of the Scott Act will be blamed on the Senate. Every pleader for the Scott Act will be turned into a denouncer of the Senate, and this is likely to be done by both political parties and in unsparring terms. The Senate will probably have a chance granted it to retire from the obstructive attitude in which it finds itself, but it cannot remove from itself the reproach of having given a large majority of votes in favor of the liquor trade. We imagine there are few Senators so very simple as to suppose that there would be any Scott law left after beer and wine were exempted from its prohibitory operation. The Senate's amendments to the Jamieson Act were simply meant to make that Act unfit to pass the Commons.—*Witness*.

Despite the petitions to the number of 700 bearing the signatures of about 100,000 names; despite the overwhelming majorities which have been given in nearly all the constituencies where the Act has been voted upon; despite the almost universal wish of the country, and the actions and assurances of the Dominion Parliament, these forty-two members of the Senate, who belong in many cases to a past age almost, take the responsibility upon their own shoulders to foist, or attempt to do so, upon the people of this enlightened and progressive Dominion an Act that they have neither asked for or require, but which they by their votes have positively declared they do not want. We believe that this act of the Senate should be its death-blow.—*Greenville Independent*.

The Senate in its unwisdom has done all it can do to frustrate the toil of years to secure efficient Temperance legislation. This will be understood by many to be a confirmation of the opinion that an irresponsible body neither understands nor respects the will of the people, as constitutionally expressed. The unusual pressure of work in the House of Commons at this late period of the session will prevent the adoption of the amendment for the present, and by the time it reaches that stage, the Temperance sentiment will find sufficiently vigorous expression to render its becoming law unlikely. It is also doubtful if a majority could be found in the popular branch of the legislature to vote in its favor.—*Canada Presbyterian*.

Down with the Senate! This will be the cry throughout the country if that ill-advised body devotes itself in the interest of the tavern-keepers to obstructing the will of the people in the matter of the Scott Act. It is sheer nonsense to think that the country is going to pay immense sums to maintain a lot of superannuated politicians in luxury for such work as this. It will be very hard, moreover, to convince the public that the enormous financial interests which are threatened by the Scott law have not had a hand in securing the action of a body, many of whose members have risen from the ranks of "practical" statesmen, to a position in which they are no longer sufficiently in awe of popular vengeance. But if the people cannot deal with their Senators in detail, they will find some way to deal with them, that is certain; and the political leader who will set a feasible plan of Senate reform or Senate abolition before the people, will gain immense popularity by so do.—*Stirling News-Arrow*.

Demanding by a majority of the Canadian people, revised and endorsed by their responsible representatives, this set of irresponsible legislators by the grace of a partizan Cabinet, dared to mutilate it (the Scott Act) beyond recognition. It is intolerable that any seventy-six men, many of them far beyond the prime of life and into a decrepid second childhood, responsible to no human being, should have in their hands the power to vitiate or strangle all popular legislation, to rudely silence all popular demands and to ride rough-shod over the dearest creations of the popular House. The British House of Lords is but a grey relic of the Dark Ages fast crumbling into dust. The Canadian Senate is a miserable, toadying copy of this fossilized abuse. They have done nothing all year but expel newspaper representatives, choke off Senator Alexander, listen to divorce cases, mutilate the Scott Act, and draw their sessional allowance. Free Canada has little use for such an appendage.

But as is always the case, there are a few grains of wheat that are not quite hidden by the chaff. We would mention with respect and admiration the names of Scott, Flint, Ferrier, Allan, Vidal and several others whose whitened, time-honored heads have been interposed more than once between the indignation of an aroused people and the insulting querulousness of their less worthy colleagues. Such men are as Lot to Sodom and as Lot they must flee to escape burning destruction.—*Canadian Patriot*.

By majorities of two to one, the Senate last week decided to destroy the Scott Act by exempting beer and wine from its provisions. We have referred to that singularly useless body on some former occasions as a "parcel of old women." We hasten to apologise—to the women. No parcel of women, old or young, white, red, black or olive colored, could be got together in this country, who would act so unwisely as the Senate does. If there can be one thing more than another, affirmed with confidence about the public opinion of this country, it is that the people want the Scott Act and they want it too, as a step to prohibition. Yet the Senate, irresponsible, antiquated, dried up old political mummies that they are, fly in the face of public opinion and mutilate and destroy the Act that the people are favoring as they never favored any other measure. All that they accomplish however, will be to kill the Scott Act Amendment Bill, which removes a legal difficulty from the Act as it stands. The Bill, as it has been, will probably remain, as the House of Commons dare not so spoil it, if it would, and probably does not want to do so.—*Waterloo Chronicle*.

The Bill sent up to the Senate from the Commons making amendments to the Scott Act in order that the Act may be properly enforced in counties where it is passed—and which was rendered necessary in consequence of certain clauses in Sir John's License Bill, which are not to be suspended, and which override the Scott Act—has received rough treatment at the hands of the irresponsible senators. Several amendments to the Bill have been made—one giving power to physicians to dispense liquors, and another permitting the sale of ale, beer, and light wines, containing not more than 12 per cent. of alcohol, in counties and cities where the Scott Act is adopted. The last amendment was carried in committee by a vote of 42 to 20, and was afterwards concurred in by the Senate. The Bill as amended will have to be sent back to the Commons, and if the amendments are not concurred in, then the Senate will have to either back down, or openly defy the will of the popular branch of the legislature by refusing to allow the Bill from the Commons to become law. What the ultimate fate of the Bill may be, it is difficult to predict, but we may say that the opinion is freely expressed that it is just possible that a majority may be found in the Commons to support the amendments tacked on to the Bill by the Senate. It is now about time that the Senate should either be remodeled or wiped out of existence.—*True Banner*.

There was a rattling yesterday of the parcel of fossilized bones which are enclosed within the gorgeous walls of the Senate Chamber, and for a wonder the noise was heard outside the costly casket in which the relics are preserved. Here was what the clatter amounted to. [Here follow the resolutions]

Let us enter the remains. They have been above ground too many years, and should be lost to sight, as they are to memory. In the antediluvian days, when the poor old bones had flesh upon them, and souls within their frames, the sentiments of the above resolutions might have accorded with those of the inhabitants of the country. This is the latter part of the nineteenth century, however, and we live in a country which has emphatically expressed an opinion on the subject of the Scott Act. An interference, therefore, by the Senate, however insignificant and abortive it may be, goes to show the truth of the contention that the alleged Upper House, is totally unrepresentative of the people, and, as an anomalous institution, should either be abolished, or the shelves in the dead past be thoroughly rummaged for the brains which, in a pre-historic time, were alleged to have been contained within the dry and withered craniums. Once secured, they might, perhaps, be attached with a clothes-line.—*St. Thomas Journal*.

That irresponsible body known as the Senate, of Canada, has been devoting its energy recently to the mutilation of the Scott Act. During the present sessions several amendments were passed by the Commons with a view of making it more workable in accordance with the wishes of the temperance party. These amendments were sent to the Senate for their approval. Without confining themselves at all to the object of the bill, they took advantage of the question being opened up and passed amendments that virtually kills the Scott Act by permitting the sale of lager beer and wine and other liquor containing not more than a certain per cent. of alcohol. In addition to this, other amendments were passed with a view of robbing the Scott Act, which has been more heartily endorsed by the people of this country than any other measure ever placed upon the statute books, of all its restrictive features. These amendments will of course have to go back to Commons for concurrence. The members of the Commons are not beyond the reach of the people and their action on this matter will be watched with the keenest interest and they will be held to strict account for what they do. Politicians think they can conjoin, bully and flatter the temperance party to keep within party lines, but we mistake the spirit they exhibited in the numerous hotly contested Scott Act campaigns if they tamely submit to be robbed of the well-earned victories for the sake of any political party.—*Aylmer Express*.

MADAGASCAR.—Queen Makea, Ratafongo, is a practical temperance Reformer. For allowing an increase of drunkenness she has dismissed her police, and filled their places with women of mature age, who are interested in the suppression of the evil. They make excellent detectives it appears, and exhibit great ability in discovering and destroying smuggled spirits. Advocates of Woman's Rights, rejoice! *Irish Traveller*.

## It Pays.

A great deal is said now days about hotels not paying where the bar business is stopped. Hamilton furnishes a practical illustration of this question. Five coffee houses have been started in and around the market square, and all are doing a good business. Since they have been opened two saloons, where whiskey was sold, have been closed up because they did not pay. If it pays to run coffee and temperance houses in Hamilton, why can't they be made to pay in other places?—*Tilsonbury Liberal*.

## What we Can Do.

What I wish to do is to lift the temperance idea to the level of its patriotic significance. I know that it has two sides. One is the Christianity that puts its arm round the drunkard and enwraps him in the warmest sympathy, and tries to plant in his heart as much resolution as he is capable of. The other side tries to make it safe for him to walk the streets by means of Prohibition. We are an inventive race, and we are ingenious in our statesmanship. If this does not succeed, we will try another plan. In Illinois, one of her richest men said: "Give me resolution to pass that open door," which led into the drinking-saloon, "and I will share my wealth with you to-morrow." He could not do it. Nobody but God can plant in a human soul that vigor of resolution which can trample this appetite under foot. But there is one thing which law can do, which the safety of republican institutions demands, and that is to shut that door.—*Wendell Phillips*.