

ment. My hon. friend talked about the election of members of Parliament, and attempted to put the Constitution, by which we hold our legislative powers here, upon the same platform as this Act; and he taunted the hon. member for East York—in very bad taste, I thought—with not sitting here by the votes of a majority of his constituents. Well, the hon. gentleman might look at his own riding—that hon. gentleman, an active temperance man, claiming largely to hold and supplement his political influence through his temperance principles, and through the fact that he is the head of the temperance movement, one of the ablest orators, and one of the best known in his own county, in 1874 was elected by acclamation. What is his record since? That in 1878, of the 4,242 registered voters in West Middlesex, he received 1,635 votes.

Mr. ROSS. Because my hon. friend did not support the Act, he was defeated.

Mr. PLUMB. There was a majority against the hon. gentleman of 2,607. I am using his own argument; it is a two-fold argument which cuts both ways. He was elected by acclamation in 1874; he has been active in getting the Temperance Act placed on the Statute-book since, and when he goes back to the people for election, they do not give him an acclamatory vote, but 1,635 out of 4,242. And the hon. gentleman uses this most irrelevant argument against having a majority for the Scott Act, one of the most important acts ever passed by Parliament, and I should not have referred to it unless he had done so himself. He talks about that being passed by a majority of the people. The hon. gentleman may remember that scarcely a quarter of the members returned to the Parliament of 1878 voted against the Bill. It was passed here by a majority of three to one, and in another House was passed by a majority of two to one. We claimed that a Bill so passed should command respect and disarm opposition by requiring for its adoption a majority also. I trust that after the hon. gentleman's temperance lecture, the House will be true to the position it took last year. I want to see those gentlemen test this Act by a majority of the voters of Canada. Unless the advocates of the Scott Act have a majority, they have no right to force their principles down the throats of those people who do not want them. I believe a stringent license law, strictly enforced, will prevent the deception, the fraud, the secret drunkenness, the unmanly evasions which always result from the stringent legislation which the hon. member wishes to perpetuate. For that reason I now advocate that no law like that should stand on the Statute-book, unless an amendment such as that proposed in the Bill of the hon. member for East York is accepted by Parliament, and I trust, therefore, his Bill will meet the approval of this House.

Mr. BANNERMAN. I was rather surprised to hear the hon. member for West Middlesex enlarge on the morality of the people in the Eastern States. Like missionaries of the same school, he always forgets to state the reverse facts of the case. If he would study the last United States departmental reports, he would see the increase which has taken place in the use of chloral and opium in the five New England States instead of whiskey, and would have had another theme to talk about. Twenty-five years ago there was one grain of opium in use for the one ounce used now in those States, and to-day there are used in those five States two drachms of chloral to the grain that was used four years ago. As for morality, any portion of the Dominion occupies a far higher scale than those States. God forbid that our people should ever sink as low in this regard as theirs has. The hon. member referred to the many eminent men born and reared in the New England States. I have no doubt they were an honor to their country and the Anglo-Saxon race, but we have in this House in the persons of the hon. leaders of both sides and

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other leading statesmen, men who will compare favorably with those to whom the hon. member referred. The whole trouble in connection with this Bill that my hon. friend has brought in is this: In South and North Renfrew, we got the Dunkin Act passed; the result was that six months after the men who worked the hardest to get the Dunkin Act passed, worked tooth and nail to get the law repealed, because it was a matter of fact. I do not know how it is, whether these people are so grasping or so near; but while we hear charges in their mouths, they keep their hands in their pockets. There is no danger that they will ever pay a cent to make the kettle boil, as the saying is. So far as I am concerned, I am prepared to vote for the Bill, as I think it is only right that a majority of the voters should sign a petition before the whole are asked to vote on this question.

Mr. LONGLEY. I do not see at present that it is necessary to discuss the general question of teetotalism versus drinking, or the prohibitory or permissive principles as applied to the suppression of the traffic in intoxicating liquors. I think we should gain by confining our attention to the issue before the House, namely, should the Scott Act, passed only so late as 1878, be maintained or repealed? We might at the very outset enquire, with advantage, whether the statement of the hon. member for West Middlesex (Mr. Ross) be true or not—that there are but two members of this House who hold their seats by a majority of all the voters in their respective constituencies, the one the hon. leader of this House and the other my witty, honest, hon. friend the member for the Isle of Cape Breton, Mr. Wm. McDonald. Now, from my own investigations and information supplied me, I am assured of the accuracy of this statement. Before I sit down I will show that even the gentlemen elected by the largest majorities, varying from 600 to 900, have not received the majority of all the votes in their respective constituencies. The supporters of this Bill are kind enough to say that they desire the Scott Act should be put into operation in a manner that would ensure its being carried out, when the difficulty would be to get it into operation at all. I ask every fair minded member if, influenced by the excitement of a general election and all the elements that enter into political contests, you cannot get a majority of the voters to come to the polls, how could you expect them to come out to vote for the Scott Act where a great deal of indifference prevails on both sides? You could not expect to get anything like the vote, under the circumstances, obtainable at a general election. I ask every fair-minded member to call to mind when the Scott Act was passed—in 1878—and the fact that scarcely was the law passed when it was pronounced by the Court in New Brunswick to be *ultra vires*, and that for one year every effort to put the Act into operation was stayed so that, as remarked by the member for West Middlesex, the law has only had the chance of a fair trial during the brief period of a single year; yet, forsooth, a motion is made for a change tantamount to a repeal of that law. It cannot be pretended, in the face of the facts, that this Bill was introduced for the purpose of strengthening the Act and promoting the cause of teetotalism. Under some hallucination difficult to conceive of, but which I will not pretend to say, the mover may have worked himself into the frame of mind to believe that. But I fancy he will have great difficulty in persuading this House that the men who have put him forward as their mouthpiece—and which he has been only too willing to become—have any ardent desire to see the cause of teetotalism flourish. I cannot free my mind of the idea that these men are fighting behind beer barrels and brandy pots, and in the interest of the Licensed Victuallers' Association, who, I understand, have become so benevolent of late, as to contribute \$100 to the poor of Toronto, or some other Ontario city, returning about one-tenth, I suppose, of what they had previously taken from the poor, by