

in inventing a policy for our good friends of the Opposition, we of the Government party might have something tangible to deal with. Considering all the diverse elements that have to be dealt with in the enforcement of the Liquor License Act, it seems to me that the success achieved is highly creditable and the results beneficial in the promotion of more temperate habits. The charge is often made by the Opposition that the administration of the License Act is complicated by political considerations, and the evil of this alleged condition has been greatly insisted upon. But the very satisfactory results that have followed—in the decrease of drunkenness; in the improvement in morality in general; in the decrease in crime; in the improvement of our hotels both in character and accommodation—all these combine to render more emphatic, if not to render unnecessary, explicit denial of such a charge. If such beneficial results as I have enumerated follow the political influence alleged to exist in the administration of the License Laws, then it is a good thing and not the evil the Opposition claim it to be.

An Objection Met.

Before concluding I may mention that another objection which is much urged by the Opposition is that the Liquor License Act represents a "robbery" of the Municipalities by the Government. Let us look for a moment into the extent of this alleged "robbery." The total revenue derived from Liquor licenses since 1876 amounts to the sum of \$11,517,021.55. Of this sum the Municipalities have received over half, or \$6,160,848.43. Besides giving to the Municipalities more than half of

all our liquor license revenues, the Province has given them for various services the large sum of between eighty and ninety millions of dollars. Add to this the municipal share of license revenue, and we have a grand total of nearly a hundred million dollars as the extent to which the people have been benefitted by Government contributions which have practically saved the levy of a corresponding amount of direct taxation. (Applause.) The gentlemen of the Opposition, or the party to which they belong, have not always been so solicitous for the welfare of the municipalities. They pretend to be indignant over the mythical "robbery" of the municipalities; but they never condemned but rather sympathised with and aided the attempt of the Dominion Government, under Conservative guiding, to rob both the Municipalities and the Province of the entire revenue from liquor licenses at one fell swoop. You all remember the ludicrous failure of the ill-conceived McCarthy Act. In conclusion, I may fairly claim that the Government, through its license legislation and administration, deserves a large degree of credit for the excellent results in the way of moral reform, the development of healthy temperance sentiment, the improvement in the character, accommodation, and equipment of hotels and a general effective control of the traffic which have tended to make the Province of Ontario the most sober and most moral community in the world, and the policy of the Government on this subject will warrant the assurance that future amendments of the law will be made in the same direction and with similar results. (Loud Applause.)