

city of Moncton with equipped bar rooms just as openly and regularly as under the license system." He then goes on to say. "Is there not some justice for the view that public opinion is only willing to enforce the Scott Act just so far as it is a fine collecting machine? This journal cannot be accused of unfriendliness to temperance sentiment or even to the Scott Act but it has long since been forced to the opinion that beyond a sentimental affirmative in favor of the Act there is no steadfast public opinion in the city of Moncton sufficiently strong to warrant any city council vigorously enforcing the measure." These words are not written by an enemy of prohibition but by one who has all his life been an earnest temperance advocate.

Now if the Canada Temperance Act cannot be enforced what reasons are there for supposing that a measure of prohibition, either general or local can be enforced without a strong sentiment of public opinion in its favor? when the temperance sentiment is not sufficiently strong to support a prohibition measure as shown clearly by the result of the prohibition plebicit taken in 1898?

On that occasion less than 44 per cent. of the electors of Canada voted and of these a little more than one half or about 22 per cent. on those who voted were for the question. Yet there were some people who found fault with the government because a measure of prohibition which had the support of about one third of the electors was not taken up by them, but even this does not state the whole case for it is well known in this Province that many persons who voted for a prohibitory liquor law

were in the habit of drinking every day and their only object in so voting was to embarrass the government and place them in a false position.

The question of prohibition may be considered in two aspects, first as to the right of a majority to the electors to prescribe to a minority what they should eat or drink, and second as to the practical consequences of such an enactment. Perhaps it may be convenient to take up the moral question first. Why should 51 people out of 100 be able to say that the other 49 shall be deprived of an article of food which they use and which they think necessary? There are in the city of Fredericton not less than 1200 electors; yet the Canada Temperance Act has been imposed on the city by 370 voters or less than one-third of the whole electorate. The consequence of this unwholesome violence of the law, is to bring all laws under the contempt, and place those who have the control of the forces of the city in a false and humiliating position, because the law is not supported by any adequate public opinion. There is no more reason why sumptuary laws should be passed in regard to drinking than in regard to eating or smoking. It is true that when a man is given up to drink he becomes a public spectacle. Every one knows of his infirmities and everyone pities his wife and children. But I will venture to assert that for every man who injures himself by liquor there are 50 who injure themselves by the excessive use of tobacco and the excessive use of food. Yet no one proposes to place a check on the consumption of tobacco or wholesome victuals. Indeed in one respect the drinking of liquor is a much less