

# The Canada Citizen

## AND TEMPERANCE HERALD

A Journal devoted to the advocacy of Prohibition, and the promotion of social progress and moral Reform.

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TORONTO FRIDAY, JANUARY 25th, 1884.

### THE CONVENTION AT MILTON.

The convention that was held last week at the county town of Halton was one of unusual interest and importance. Halton is the only county in Ontario in which the Scott Act is in operation, and while the friends of temperance have been watching events there with the deepest interest, the opponents of the measure have been doing their utmost to make it a failure. A repeal-vote having been threatened by the anti-Scott party, the temperance men called a convention to discuss the situation, and to provide organization to resist any attempt to bring back the days of whisky rule. The reports made by the delegates to that convention are encouraging in the extreme. The Act has proved a success fully equal to the expectations of its warmest advocates, and the people of Halton are evidently determined to resolutely fight for the retention of the benefits it has conferred upon them.

One of the objections most frequently urged against prohibition is the difficulty of enforcing it. The experience of Halton is that the Scott Act there is enforced as well as the license act in other localities. It is easier to prohibit evil than to permit and restrict it. A thorough-going measure of prohibition would be easier of enforcement than a partial one. The success of the Scott Act utterly refutes the (so-called) argument against total prohibition—that it would be impracticable.

Other counties that have been considering the question of voting upon the Scott Act will now be encouraged. They may drop hesitation and boldly go in to work and win, confident not only that their cause is good, but that their efforts are hopeful, and that success will mean a real benefit to the temperance cause, and practical advantage to the whole community.

It must always be borne in mind that the Scott Act is not what we want. It is good as far as it goes, but it has been accepted by temperance men only as an instalment of legislation. It was taken hold of, for the purpose of showing (1) that prohibition is practicable, (2) that the sentiment of this county is in favor of prohibition. Both these points have now been settled. Our position has been

triumphantly established, and there does not exist any more excuse for merely tentative legislation. We will go on doing all in our power to extend the operations of the Scott Act, but at the same time we more earnestly than ever reiterate our demand for what there can now be no rational pretext for denying us—total, absolute prohibition of the manufacture, importation and sale of alcoholic beverages.

### THE CONFLICTING LAWS.

Sir John A. Macdonald has assured the House of Commons that the McCarthy Act will be put into operation, and that liquor sellers will be required to take out licenses in compliance with its provisions. As we pointed out some time ago, the decision of the Privy Council in *Queen vs. Hodge* did not in terms deny the right of the Dominion Parliament to restrict and license the liquor-traffic. So far there have been definitely settled only two points, namely: 1. The Dominion Parliament may prohibit. 2. The Local Legislation may license and restrict. No ultimate decision has yet been given as to the right of the Dominion Parliament to license and restrict the traffic, even as a matter of trade and commerce. It would seem strange, however, if an authority that could go so far as to say, "There shall be none," could not go so far as to say, "There shall only be few." Neither has it been definitely decided that the Local Legislation which has the right to prohibit nearly all sale in the interest of good government and morality, has not also the right, upon similar grounds, to prohibit the indefinite remaining sale. As the matter now stands, anyone who intends to sell after the first day of next May, must take out two distinct licenses from two distinct authorities, each of which claims the right to prohibit all sale that it does not specifically permit.

It is strange that electors, and legislators, and interpreters of legislation, and even liquor-dealers do not grow sick of this endless, weary, fruitless waste of time and energy and means in vainly endeavoring to regulate an evil that cannot be regulated. It is almost universally admitted that the liquor-traffic is evil. Any sanction of what is evil must be immoral. Liquor-license laws are a disgrace to our statute books, and we ought to at once abandon these miserable, unsuccessful, crime-producing attempts at regulation, and manfully come out for the only right and only practical method of managing a wrong—abolishing it altogether.

### Selected Articles.

#### THE ONE QUESTION.

It has been the fashion to sneer at any movement in favor of Temperance. Rum and beer drinking has been treated as a matter in which only those who drank had any right to be considered—that it was something that the public had nothing to do with.

Under certain conditions this might be correct. If rum was as innocent as beef steak, or, if looked upon as deadly poison, if the consumer were the only one to suffer, this might pass current.

But it so happens that this is not the case. There is not a drop of rum consumed that does not affect the public at large as much as the consumer. Consequently the public has a right to say something as to how and on what terms it can be used.

An examination of the police reports and the records of the criminal courts will disclose the fact that 90 per cent. of all the criminality in the country is the direct result of the use of intoxicants. Every one familiar with the statistics of pauperism knows that 90 per cent. of those who are public charges come to this sad estate through the use of stimulants. Everybody who knows anything knows that rum is the first educator in crime, and the final finisher of the criminal. Everybody knows that rum