

Campaign News.

SIMCOE.—The pleasant days of autumn witness the starting of the Scott Act contest in the county of Simcoe in real earnest. The proclamation, in accordance with the terms of the petition and the Act, of His Excellency the Governor-General has been made in the *Canada Gazette*. Of course, although the proclamation has been issued, there is at present a lull, as if the hosts of both sides were surveying the field and gathering up their energies for a month's hard warfare, which they are loth to begin. A day or two will end that, and the armor having been buckled on, the noise and strength of the fray will greet every elector in the county of Simcoe. The weak points in the arguments and contentions of both sides will be made the most of, and electors will sometimes be puzzled as to which is the stronger cause. We confess that in a contest such as this, with the very conflicting evidence both for and against the Act, it is extremely difficult to determine just what is and what is not correct. It strikes us, therefore, that the determination of a voter as to whether he shall vote for or against the Act must largely be decided by his own personal experiences with reference to the results to flow from the defeating of the Act or the reverse. In all questions of semi-moral considerations, this must necessarily be the case. An argument which would strike one man as being utterly impossible of being upset, will leave a vastly different impression on the mind of another. Both may be equally honest; but the life experiences of the two men have been widely different. Hence we arrive at the conclusion that, so far as the moral phase of the question is concerned, the only duty a secular newspaper has in the premises is to point out the responsibility of the individual and to leave him to decide the matter for himself and those of his own household. We cannot take it upon us to be a moral censor, and say because facts and arguments appear from our life experience to lead to a certain conclusion that every man's moral sense must bend to coincide with our decision regarding our individual duty as a citizen. Every man must accept that responsibility as a moral agent for himself, and the reader will, on accepting the responsibility to vote as he thinks his own and his country's interests requires, have very little difficulty in determining whether that moral requirement will lead him in this contest. But, let it be for or against the Act, the voter should not allow excited and frantic appeals, or pity or sympathy, beyond the claims of humanity, to cause him to vote differently than his judgment decides.

The preliminary work of the contest has been concluded, and the people have now a duty to perform. The proclamation of the Governor-General in the *Gazette* forth that, in accordance with a petition asking to have the second part of the Act come into force and take effect in the county of Simcoe, for taking the votes of the electors for and against the said petition. The number of signatures to the notice proved to be genuine is 5,267, more than one-fourth of all the electors of the county of Simcoe. The voting will be between nine and three o'clock on the above 9th of October, and the returning officer will be Mr. John Stewart, of Alliston, who will appoint a deputy returning officer at and for each polling place or station. He will also, at the Court house, Barrie, on the 6th of October, appoint scrutineers for both sides, at 10 o'clock a.m., in the Court house, Barrie.—*Northern Advance*.

LANARK.—The Scott Act meeting held last Wednesday night in Zion Church, under the auspices of the Carleton Place Women's Christian Temperance Union, was the first of the campaign in this place. There was a fair attendance. The meeting was opened by devotional exercises. The people sang a hymn, Rev. D. McDonald read, and Rev. T. C. Brown offered prayer. After this Rev. A. A. Scott called upon Dr. Preston, Reeve, to take the chair. The chairman stated that, although he observed by the programme placed in his hands that he was expected to make an address, he would refrain from doing so; there were a number of speakers, and he would call upon them forthwith. It had been said that he was opposed to the Scott Act. He wished to say that he had not indiscriminately become opposed to anything; the fact was, he was not opposed to anything. Anything that could be proven to be the best thing for the people—let it be Scott Act or anything else—would not be the thing he would oppose. If the Scott Act was a good thing, he would give it due credit and support. He trusted that in this Scott Act campaign the best and most practicable means of informing the

people on the subject would be afforded. He called upon Rev. G. F. Johnson to speak, and in a general manner that gentleman referred to the evils of permitting a public drawback like the liquor traffic to exist in the land. Rev. A. A. Scott then called the attention of the audience to the Scott Act itself. He referred to the causes that had brought about the enactment of such a measure. It was the result of a determined effort of the people to gain prohibition. It had supplanted the Dunkin Act because it was incomparably better. It was prohibition, prohibiting the traffic in and use of intoxicants, except for three purposes—wine for sacramental use and spirits for manufacturing and for medicinal use; and for these purposes its sale was so restricted that imposition was almost impossible if the temperance people stood true to their principles. The means of enforcing the Scott Act were good and strong, and had been very effectual elsewhere. Rev. D. McDonald then overwhelmingly combatted and showed the groundlessness of the following and other objections, viz.: That hotels without bar-rooms wouldn't pay; that the Scott Act is not prohibition; that under it there is as much liquor drunk as before; that it hurts trade; that it is easy to violate the Scott Act; that it's not right to make men sober by Act of Parliament; that it will spoil the barley market; that it will ruin the revenue; that it is opposed to liberty; that horse sheds in the towns cannot be had. The speaker "nailed" the numerous objections and sophistries by the use of the stern logic of facts. Rev. T. C. Brown said that he had had an experience in Halton county and Ernestown township of the Dunkin Act, which, although inferior to the Scott Act, did much good where fairly tried. The speaker said that to the objections just dealt with might be added a good many more. The Scott Act, for instance, might injure the doctors, for under it broken limbs and deadly disease would be less common; policemen might lack for work, and even the lawyers might experience a falling off in trade. He then went to the Bible on temperance. The Bible was prohibition itself. Nine different and distinct words were used in the original Hebrew referring to the different kinds of wine, and not once was the use of intoxicating drink advised or countenanced, but was everywhere condemned. He asked if any father would sell the morality, the life, the soul of his son for the amount given to a town by the liquor license fee, and urged every church member and every Christian to support the Scott Act.—*Carleton Place Herald*.

RENFREW.—The first public meeting in the county to oppose the Scott Act was held in Pembroke last week under the patronage of Thos. Murray, M.P.P., for North Renfrew.

We have not room in our column to copy the full reports as contained in the Pembroke papers; but comment on a few extracts:—

"Mr. Murray said he had been away from home for some time and when he had returned he was surprised to find that it was seriously proposed to submit the Act. He disapproved very much of the Act, and thought it a very expensive undertaking to have it submitted here. It would disarrange and destroy the business prospects of the town and county; and, if carried, would not stop the sale of liquor."

What business will the passing of the Scott Act damage but the liquor business? Will somebody please rise and explain. This talk about the Act "hurting business," is very much dealing with generalities. It is popularly supposed that Mr. Murray is largely interested in both the wholesale and retail sale of liquor. If this is so, and he believes as he says that the passing of the Act will not stop the sale of liquor, why does he oppose the Act?

Mr. Murray further said that large sums of money had been spent in building and fitting up proper accommodation for the public, and the gentlemen who owned the property would require to sell or close their premises.

The passing of the Act will only close the liquor bars. The house, with all the rooms necessary for the accommodation of the public, will be left standing. If it is said that there will not be enough business for all of them then, it is simply admitting that they are excrescences or worse, for sailing under the name of "hotels" they are simply "shops" for the sale of intoxicating liquor. And the people want the traffic in liquor to be done away with.

Mr. M. J. Gorman is reported as saying that there was no provision in the Act for its proper enforcement. For the present law we had Inspectors, but no provision is made in the Act for such.