

majority came to be obtained ; it is this way—I have been credibly informed by citizens of that place that the majority would have been against the petition had it not been that all the really temperate people, whether they were imbibers or not, were conscious of the fact that if the petition was thrown out there would then be no liquor law of any sort or kind to take its place in that city, and the consequence might have been that the place might have become a pandemonium. For that reason, people voted in favor of the continuation of the law. I have already stated that another tendency of this Act, is to promote illicit trading, and that is one of the most serious objections to the law. The Senate should pause seriously before establishing finally and ultimately a state of thing which might bring about in Canada amongst our population such scenes as I have described this afternoon from English history. I do hope that great caution will be exercised before any such law is made permanent. I have said that I was a supporter of the Canada Temperance Act at its original introduction, and that I have supported it since, and that I intend to support the amendments which are before the House for the same reasons—that it shall have every chance possible and that it shall not leave any community, however small, without something to take its place—but I say this also, that I am so opposed to its principle and have seen its failure so conspicuously, that if the Government of the day would introduce a practical measure which, while repressing intemperance, at the same time abstained from outraging those principles of liberty and common sense which I think are outraged by this Act, I should certainly support it. It is perfectly clear that it will not do to abrogate the Act altogether, and I think it would be inexpedient to cripple the working of the Canada Temperance Act until its place is supplied by something else. It is an infringement of our liberties. It may perhaps be considered a very small infringement of our liberties to debar us from enjoyments to which we have been accustomed, but I think that besides the loss of the accustomed glass to those who have been in the habit of taking it temperately, we have to consider the principle involved as well, and we ought to take every means to prevent any infringement, however

small, on our liberties as citizens. It is very true that we every day in the legislature impose, and our citizens submit to certain restrictions on their liberties, but those restrictions are always made for the good of the whole community. They are not made in any arbitrary way to deal with one class and not affect another ; and therefore the people submit to them without hesitation. I think it is unjust to punish the liquor seller. If it is a crime to sell liquor, it seems to me that it is also a crime to drink it, and the same law which makes it a crime to sell, ought to make it a crime to drink, else there is a great inequality in the law. A man sells liquor, and he is punished for it ; the man who drinks the liquor gets off free. Suppose, for a moment, you adopt a similar principle in criminal law, in that case you might punish the receiver of stolen goods, and let the thief go free? What sort of criminal law would that be? And yet the clauses of the Canada Temperance Act which punish the liquor seller, and let the drinker go free, seem to me to bear great analogy to that case. If we wish to remove the evil of intemperance from amongst us, we ought to begin at the foundation, seek out the cause of the evil, and use a united effort to eradicate it. If we look at some of the countries of Europe I think we will all admit, as the hon. gentleman from Ottawa admitted yesterday, that there was a time, not so very remote either—I think he mentioned twenty years—when the French and the Swiss were a temperate people, when they drank the wines of their own vineyards, and the spirits they consumed were distilled from the inferior quality of grapes, and the hon. gentleman, I think, plainly admitted that the French and the Swiss were temperate men under those circumstances. Now, let us see for a moment how those circumstances have changed, because this is a very important factor in the temperance question. We have imposed heavy duties on liquor through our excise laws for certainly more than a hundred years, and what has been the effect of it? The effect of it has been that attempts are being continually made, and in most instances successfully made, to adulterate liquors, and to sell cheap and noxious compounds in place of what is naturally not unwholesome unless it is