

TEMPERANCE.

The Toronto Mail has turned round on the temperance question, and advocates a thorough enforcement of the Scott Act. Whatever motives political papers may ascribe to this action, we trust its advocacy will do good.

The Scott Act (local option), pretty generally adopted in Ontario, till recently seemed to be in danger of proving a failure. With but a few notable exceptions, more drunkenness prevailed after the passing of the Act than before. From a knowledge of the nature in which the whiskey traffic was conducted, this might have been readily supposed; for the wanton and flagrant abuse of the position which hotel-keepers occupied, and which induced moderate men and even indifferent men so far as general principles were concerned, to vote for the Act, was not likely to be in a moment subdued. Subsequent events have gone to show an element in society abandoned to the most cowardly practices and wretched subterfuges. While there are hotelkeepers possessed of manly dignity, nevertheless the degrading effect of the traffic upon the majority of them and upon those who hang on their smile and nod, has been brought to light clearer than ever before.

The strongest possible argument against whiskey, rather than the Scott Act, is the action its votaries have revealed since it came into force. It is too conspicuously true that there is an element associated with whiskey that has proven itself to have no regard for law written or unwritten. It is natural, then, that all means of opposition, strategic and malicious in certain quarters should be resorted to. Acts of fiendishness have been perpetrated that mark a thoroughly vitiated mind, not performed perhaps so much by whiskey sellers as by those who think it will please their landlords; but it all comes out of the miserable business which is being more and more brought into disrepute by its own dark hands. For some reason many saloon keepers have mistaken the feelings of decent men, and have supposed that because many were not total abstainers they were sympathizers to any extent that selfishness and vindictiveness might lead.

A part of the Anti-Scott Act faction have held a

short reign of terror over some communities. Houses have even been burned or blown up with dynamite, until few would venture to expose themselves in bringing about convictions; and it was complained of the Government that proper officials and machinery were not provided.

The Ontario Government, it seems, has taken the matter in hand and its detectives are making it uncomfortable for evil doers. A Sarnia hotel-keeper was very cleverly discovered and arrested by Government detectives on the 25th of last month in connection with the dynamite explosion at J. G. McCrae's house in 6th month, last; and also a plot to blow up Inspector Palmer. The penalty for such an offence is severe, being imprisonment for life.

The Globe says: "What is necessary is to prove that the laws of the land can and will be enforced against criminals of every class, and the criminals had better take notice accordingly."

Hotelkeepers say: "Business is going to the dogs in this place. Farmers must have their whiskey or they won't come into the town and trade." This is an accusation the intelligent yeomanry of this Province would take burning exception to coming from any other source, but they say nothing and silently pity an unfortunate man in an unfortunate business. Trade goes on as usual and it would be simple to suppose the contrary. It is not the only thing to look after in this world at any rate.

All, and hotelkeepers included, will be ultimately convinced that the earth will continue to turn once on its axis every 24 hours, the sun rise in the East and set in the West, and that we will have a country full with inhabitants, even though no whiskey should be sold; that the great natural law of trade will prevail without a charter from King Alcohol; and that our people can have happy, comfortable homes and money in the till without the permission of the liquor traffic. It is yet to be shown that we are prosperous in a direct ratio to the amount of whiskey consumed.

A minister some time since contended that the hotelkeepers and their friends could prove the Scott Act a success. In his town twelve hotelkeepers were brought before the Magistrate for violations of the Act, and 60 friends gave evidence. The twelve swore that