

THE ONTARIO TEMPERANCE ACT

Question.—What is the Ontario Temperance Act?

Answer.—The Ontario Temperance Act is the name of the Prohibition Measure introduced by Premier Sir William Hearst and passed by the Ontario Legislature and which came into force on Sept. 16th, 1916.

Q.—What are its main provisions?

A.—It prohibits the sale of intoxicating liquors for beverage purposes, also the keeping or having or giving of liquor except in private houses. It contains effective enforcement provisions, and provides severe penalties for law violation.

Q.—Is it a thorough-going measure?

A.—It goes practically as far in the direction of total prohibition as the constitutional powers of the Province will permit.

Q.—What does it not prohibit?

A.—It cannot and does not prohibit the manufacture, importation or inter-provincial shipment of liquor. These are matters outside Provincial jurisdiction.

Q.—What about the securing of liquor for necessary purposes?

A.—Government agencies have been established and adequate provision made for the supplying of liquor for medicinal, industrial, mechanical and sacramental purposes. Only the sale for beverage purposes is prohibited.

Q.—Is it good law?

A.—The Privy Council, the highest judicial authority in the British Empire, has declared it to be so.

Q.—Wherein does its strength lie?

A.—The strength of the Ontario Temperance Act lies in the fact that, while it does all that the Province has power to do, it stops within its power. If it contained more stringent provisions than are now embodied in it there would be doubt as to its constitutionality.

Q.—How is it administered?

A.—By a Board of License Commis-

sioners, consisting of three men appointed by the Government. The Board has very wide powers and has efficiently and sympathetically administered the law.

Q.—Has it made good?

A.—Premier Hearst says: "I say, without hesitation, I do not know anyone Act or measure in this province that increased the efficiency of our people, conserved our financial strength, aided thrift and generally contributed to our fighting power to a greater extent than The Ontario Temperance Act."

Hon. N. W. Rowell says: "The results have been so satisfactory that large numbers of those who were opposed to the adoption of the measure are now its warm supporters. Thousands of wives and children are better clothed, better fed and know more of the real meaning of "home" to-day than they ever knew before. Crime has been substantially reduced; the efficiency and earning power of the worker materially increased; business has been stimulated,

Q.—Is the United States dry?

A.—Yes. On July 1st, war-time prohibition became effective. This is a temporary measure, but on January 16th, 1920, the constitutional amendment recently adopted, comes into force, making permanent the prohibition of the manufacture, importation, exportation, transportation and sale of intoxicating beverages of all kinds.

Q.—What would be the effect if intoxicating liquors should be sold in Ontario with the United States dry?

A.—Decidedly bad. Between the Province of Ontario alone and the United States there is an international boundary line of 1,000 miles, touching six States, New York, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin and Minnesota. Ontario would rival Mexico as the drinking resort of the American continent, a condition which every citizen who has the honor of his country at heart should strongly deplore and vigorously oppose.