

point. Scotland had a licensing system much in advance of England. On the 14th of June forty-three Scotch members voted and paired with Sir Wilfrid Lawson, and only five against him. That extraordinary vote had arrested the attention of every man thinking on the subject. How was it that Scotland was so unanimous as that? Scotland had got Sunday closing. (Hear, hear.) There were temperance men who said to them: "Let us be content by getting a Sunday Closing Bill for England." They took that as good as settled. Public opinion was ripening fast on that point, and the Government that would not give them that would not satisfy them. Surely England was not going to be left out long, after Ireland, Scotland, and Wales had been dealt with. But they took a more comprehensive view of the question than that of Sunday closing. Scotland had not the Beer Act and other developments affecting England, and in considering the proposal which had been made that the licensing power should be conferred upon town councils, Scotland could give some evidence upon that subject. The licensing system over the larger portion of Scotland had been conferred practically upon town councils. The burghs of Scotland and large towns were under corporate arrangements the same as England. In all these cases the men who act as magistrates were the bailies who are first elected by ratepayers into the councils, and there they are elected by the councils as a committee of magistrates, if they would allow the phrase. In some towns there were four, some six, some eight, and up to twelve, as in Glasgow. The bailies were the Town Council Committee for magisterial purposes, and one of their functions was the granting of licences. The chairman should mark that, as strengthening his position. He (the chairman) had made a good case against mixing up licensing authority with administrative work. It must not be said that they were irresponsible men, because they came from the people and had to go back to the people for all their power, and the people had power to reflect public opinion in that way. Did not the people of Scotland show that they wanted something more than their present law provided when they sent forty-three votes into the lobby with Sir Wilfrid Lawson, while only five went into the opposite lobby? That fact alone would be sufficient to make them cautious against mixing up licences with Town Councils.