

out of every 444 was committed for drunkenness. But more noticeable still are the figures if we take the Scott Act period, as we call it. Honourable members will remember that in 1886, 1887 and 1888 twenty-five of our counties out of forty-one were under the Scott Act—more than half of our counties. I ask honourable gentlemen to notice the figures as shown by the commitments for drunkenness in these three Scott Act years. In 1886 the number of commitments was 3,555; in the following year 4,180, and in the last Scott Act year 4,451. The number of commitments increased during each of the Scott Act years. Then I take the last three license years—1894, 1895 and 1896. The number of commitments in 1894 dropped from 4,400 to 2,274. The following year, 1895, it again dropped to 2,237, and last year it dropped to 1,907. In our last three license years the total number of commitments was 6,418; whereas in the three Scott Act years it was 12,186.

I think I may fairly argue, that there has been a moral revolution in the drinking habits of our people, and that this revolution is partly attributable to the wise provisions of this legislature, and partly to the fact that, the laws have been reasonably well enforced—as well enforced as is possible when we consider the nature of these laws. Some may argue that we have relaxed the law under which people are committed for drunkenness, but I have not been dealing with the arrests to which these apply. I allude to the provisions of 55, 58 and 59 Vic., which deal with the release of persons arrested for drunkenness. I am not alluding to the actual arrests, but to commitments, which are two different things, so that my comparisons are fair.

I have now briefly alluded to our past legislation, and also to some of the results of that legislation; and I have asked the House to notice that these twelve statutes, one after the other, step by step, gave an instalment in the direction wished for and asked for by those who now criticize our bill, by saying, that it does not go far enough on temperance lines. I might add that we have 816 municipalities; that in one-fifth of them there is no license at all granted for the sale of liquors, viz: 185 municipalities; and further, that in 228 municipalities, there are only two licenses each granted. Those figures are both instructive and interesting, if they be examined carefully and thought over.