

may soon be extended to many more. The highest legal tribunal in this country has declared that it is within our competence and that this Parliament has jurisdiction over the subject matter, because it relates to trade and commerce; therefore, I apprehend there can be no question as to the constitutionality of a provision of this kind in the Militia Law, for that subject is also within our jurisdiction. There can be no doubt as to the power of Parliament to deal with this subject, but what is the necessity for this legislation? Colonel—now General—Wolsley, in his report on the expedition to the Red River, points out clearly the great benefit which he believed was experienced by the troops under his control—both the regulars and the volunteers—in being deprived of all intoxicating liquors. He declares that they were more efficient, that they were in better health, and that the *morale* of the force was much improved by total abstinence from strong drink, and he recommended that a similar rule should be adopted in other parts of the Queen's Dominion. It appears from the accounts we have had of atrocities committed by the troops in South Africa, they must be attributed to over indulgence in intoxicating liquors. What harm, Mr. Speaker, can there be in requiring the Militia Forces, when assembled under the law for the purpose of drill, to abstain from the use of intoxicating liquors? It is true that you cannot prevent them from procuring beer or whiskey when out of camp, and off duty, or from indulging in other vices, but do you prevent this in any way by stimulating their appetites with strong beer while in camp? You only, in fact, keep alive that appetite, and induce them to go elsewhere for stronger drinks. I do not see that any beneficial result can flow from this provision as to canteens, and while we have a Temperance Act on the Statute-book, I do not think it can be justified. Seeing that the Government in the other House are carrying through amending provisions to make that Act more effective—we presume with the concurrence of their colleagues in this House—seeing that they have recognised the utility of that Act, and that the highest legal tribunal in the Dominion has recognised and affirmed its constitutionality, we can only regret the appear-

ance of a section in the Militia Bill which practically repeals *pro tanto* the general law. Our Militia Force must be maintained; we do not know how soon we may have to use it; but, while we are endeavouring to make it efficient, we ought to look at the testimony of men who have regarded this question from the practical military point of view. I believe that testimony is that the supply of intoxicating liquors of any kind to troops in the field, in hot countries or in cold countries, is an evil and not a benefit. I hope the President of the Council will allow this clause to drop.

MR. LONGLEY: I also, for one, hope the hon. the President of the Council will consent to withdraw this clause. I think it is against the sentiment of the people of this Dominion, and, perhaps, against the sentiment of the best portion of them. Are we to assume that the men upon whom we are chiefly to rely for defence, in case of invasion, cannot get along without intoxicating liquors? All history proves that men are infinitely better soldiers without than with intoxicating drinks, and that nothing so demoralises men, when they are assembled together for drill, or for the defence of the country, as the use of intoxicating drinks of any sort. It is contended that it were better to have these liquors sold under the control of the military authorities, than to have them sold without these restraints. My education, in regard to this question, is exactly the reverse of that assumption. The mischief all comes in consequence of the recognition given by the law to this infamous traffic. If intoxicating drinks must be sold it were better, in the judgment of temperance men, that they should be sold without the sanction of law than with it. I think in connection with the Volunteer Force, all over the Dominion, any excesses which may have taken place are almost entirely attributable to the use of intoxicating liquors on the ground. I do not think it is fair to assume that, because provision is made in this Bill that the liquor shall be sold under the control of the military authorities, the influence will be any better than if the liquor was sold in some other way. In the name of reason let the law be against and not in favour of the recognition of this traffic. Let us try the experiment of drilling our volunteers.