

CRIME IN HALTON.

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One of the favorite falsehoods circulated by the anti-Scotts in other counties is the unfounded assertion that there is a greater proportion of crime in Halton than in most other counties, and, than in the Province at large; and that since the Act came in force, there has been more crime than at any former period of the same length. A gentleman said to me, not long since, in a neighboring county, "If there is less crime in Halton now than formerly, it must have been a terrible place at one time." Such are the mis-statements with which the anti-Scotts try to deceive the people. It is a noteworthy fact, that during the late contest in Halton, the assertion that there is more crime here than in other counties, and than at any former period was never made—no man, not even E. K. Dodds himself, would have dared to make such a statement. The truth is that Halton was always one of the most law-abiding counties in Ontario, and that it is vastly more so now than ever before. Happily we are not left to any mere conjecture on this point, as is necessarily the case, more or less, with reference to the relative amount of liquor drunk here before and since the inception of the Act. The official statistics of crime for 1883, published by the Dominion Government, have recently been received, and from them many suggestive facts may be gathered, which has the same effect as the assertions of the anti-Scotts, that a charge of dynamite does upon buildings under which it is exploded. Coming from such a source, of course the figures are authentic and indisputable, and from them there can be no appeal. For the purpose of comparison with Halton we take all the bordering counties, *viz.*, Peel, Wellington and Wentworth, where the circumstances and likelihood of crime are as nearly as possible equal, with the exception of the liquor laws. We also choose a number of counties representative of all parts of the Province, but taking the majority from the western part. Some of these, as Huron, Oxford, Norfolk, etc., are among the most law-abiding counties in the Province. Others, as Wentworth, Carleton and Hastings, are among the worst, though not the worst. Our selection is more than fair to our opponents, as in all but three out of the twelve counties chosen, the amount of crime is less than the proportionate amount for the whole Province. Now let us see how Halton stands the test.

First, we notice that, with one exception, every one charged with crime in Halton was convicted, which is the case in no other county. Now the only correct comparison of crime is between the number charged, not the number convicted. For instance, we notice that in Wentworth there were twenty-nine persons charged with house and shop breaking, and of these only nine were convicted. But, although the other twenty were acquitted, yet the crimes with which they were charged must have been committed by some one—the only difficulty being, either that the parties arrested were not the guilty parties, or that there was not sufficient evidence to secure conviction. So in these comparisons we will consider the number of persons charged with crime as being the number of crimes actually committed. However, that no fault may be found, we give both the number of crimes committed, and the number of convictions secured.

We find that in 1883, there were seventy-four crimes in Halton committed, and seventy-three persons convicted. Of these, however, seventeen were for vagrancy, and thirty-four for breaches of the Scott Act. These require remark. In Milton, the county town, there is no lock-up, so all vagrants are committed and sent to the gaol, and are reported to the Government. In other county towns, such as Brampton, Woodstock, etc., there are lockups, so that the majority of those vagrants who, in Halton, are sent to the gaol and reported, in the other counties would have been sent to the lockup and not reported. So, for fairness, that seventeen must be deducted. The other thirty-four are for violations of the Scott Act. Very naturally the hotel-keepers of Halton fought against the Act for the first term, hoping it would be repealed at the end of that time. It is decidedly unfair, in speaking of the amount of crime under the Scott Act, to include the wilful violations of that Act. It is decidedly "cheeky," though thoroughly characteristic, for the anti-Scotts to speak of the amount of crime in Halton, when over one-half of it is caused by their determined opposition to the Act. If then we deduct the seventeen vagrants, and the thirty-four viola-

tions of the Scott Act, we have a total of 23 crimes committed, and 22 convictions for crime during 1883, in Scott Act Halton. We venture the assertion that no other county in Ontario can show so little crime in proportion to the population. To make this more readily understood and more impressive, we give below a comparative table, showing the number of people to each crime committed, and also the number to each person convicted in each county, and in the whole Province. I deduct from each the number of vagrants and breaches of the Scott Act, and other liquor laws:—

COUNTY.	Population	Number of Crimes Charged.	Number of Persons Convicted.	Number of People for every crime Charged.	Number of People for Every Person Convicted.
Halton .....	21,919	23	22	953	906
Brant .....	38,891	291	220	116	154
Wellington.....	73,535	707	520	104	141
Wentworth .....	66,951	2,841	1,705	23	39
Carleton .....	52,105	1,479	1,000	85	52
Peel .....	16,387	75	72	218	227
Huron .....	75,991	173	143	439	531
Norfolk .....	33,591	159	152	211	221
Simcoe .....	64,162	559	486	115	132
Oxford .....	49,107	363	305	135	161
Hastings.....	55,021	1,001	605	55	91
Grey .....	74,184	225	210	240	294
Ontario.....	48,826	211	189	231	258
Province of Ontario.	1,385,469	23,199	15,735	58	86

Lo, the difference! While in Halton there is only one crime committed to every 953 of a population, in Brant there is one to every 116, in Wellington one to 104, in Wentworth one to 23, in Carleton one to 35, &c.; and in the whole Province one to every 58 people. Even in Huron, where there is probably less crime than in any other county except Halton, there is one crime for every 439 people. To make this difference even more emphatic, we give below the statement in another form.

In proportion to the population there was during 1883:—

In Brant....	8 times as much crime and 6 times as many convictions as in Halton
" Wellington 9	" " 7 " " "
" Wentworth 41	" " 25 " " "
" Carleton.. 27	" " 19 " " "
" Peel..... 4	" " 4 " " "
" Huron.... 2	" " 13 " " "
" Norfolk.. 4½	" " 4½ " " "
" Simcoe... 8	" " 7 " " "
" Oxford... 7	" " 6 " " "
" Hastings.. 17	" " 11 " " "
" Grey..... 4	" " 3½ " " "
" Ontario... 4	" " 3½ " " "
" Province of Ontario.. 16	" " 11½ " " "

This should be sufficient, once for all, to refute the absurd statement as to the amount of crime in Halton. But, lest some old croaker, driven into a corner, should say that the amount of crime has always been small here, but that it is greater than formerly, we give below another table in which we give the crime for 1881, (the last whole year during which Halton was under license), and for 1883 under the Scott Act, showing the increase or decrease per centum. We deduct breaches of liquor laws and vagrants in each county and for both years:

COUNTY.	Number of crimes committed in 1881.	Number of crimes committed in 1883.	Decrease per cent.	Increase per cent.	Number of persons convicted in 1881.	Number of persons convicted in 1883.	Decrease per cent.	Increase per cent.
Halton.....	68	23	66	..	64	22	65	..
Brant.....	354	291	18	..	278	220	21	..
Wellington.	614	707	..	15	358	520	..	45
Wentworth.	2460	2841	..	15	1594	1705	..	7
Carleton....	1217	1479	..	21	730	1000	..	37
Peel.....	78	75	4	..	68	72	..	6
Huron.....	396	173	56	..	324	143	55	..
Norfolk....	120	159	..	32	114	152	..	33
Simcoe.....	450	559	..	22	402	486	..	21
Oxford....	353	363	..	3	315	305	3	..
Hastings...	902	1091	..	11	430	605	..	41
Grey.....	357	255	29	..	282	210	26	..
Ontario....	175	211	..	21	155	189	..	22
Province of Ontario..	21,189	23,199	..	9½	15,178	15,735	..	3½