

## THE PLEBESCITE.

Only Twenty-seven Per Cent. of the Electors in its Favor.

Prohibition Condemned by an Overwhelming Majority of the People.

The completed returns of the Ontario Plebiscite are now at hand, and Colonel Clarke, the Clerk of the Legislature, is hard at work preparing a statement for the House. We may anticipate in this to the extent of publishing the figures and making an examination of what they are worth. But before doing so it may be as well to give a brief resume of events prior to the taking of the vote.

At the last session of the Legislature Mr. Marter, of Muskoka, moved the second reading of a Bill to abolish retail liquor licenses. Mr. Davis, of North York, moved in amendment the three months' hoist, and was immediately followed by Hon. G. W. Ross, Minister of Education, who moved in amendment to the amendment that a Plebiscite vote of the electors of the Province duly qualified to vote at elections for the Legislature, and in addition, of the women entitled to vote at municipal elections, be taken on the question of Prohibition. This carried, and the question submitted to the people was as to whether the elector was or was not in favor of the manufacture, importation and sale of intoxicating liquor for beverage purposes. The difference widely from the original bill as introduced by Mr. Marter, and was most craftily arranged in several respects. For instance, while submitting the abstract question of Prohibition, it avoided all issue as to enforcement, jurisdiction, upon whom the cost would fall, in what manner the deficit in the provincial and municipal revenues were to be met, and many other matters of grave concern, if a trial is ever to be made of Prohibition. The cost of taking the vote, however, was saddled upon the municipalities, thus taxing the people in an attempt to compel them to say what they most did not want.

Then began one of the worst kind of campaigns ever witnessed in Canada. If it were not for the serious interests that may be involved, the whole thing would have been a comedy of the highest order. The Prohibitionists saw their advantage and made the most of it. They organized a campaign of tremendous energy; swung the temperance lodges, a portion of the women and certain of the churches into line; made it an issue in the municipal elections; scattered literature broadcast; held meetings in every hall, school-house and cross-roads in the country; turned the pulpit for the time being into a political rostrum; preached, prayed, threatened, scolded and enjoined, and never ceased until the last vote was taken. Their campaign was marred by only one mistake, the bringing into the country of a couple of United States blathskites, who had not honor enough to support themselves in their own country, nor decency enough to show gentleness respect to the people of this when they came into it. We will deal with this pair of thugs at another time.

While the Prohibitionists were so engaged the politicians were making friends and efforts to get a holding clutch upon the temperance vote. From both political headquarters instructions were sent out, the game of politics was played to the hilt, and there was seen the absurdity of men who would be the very first to break a prohibitory law voting for it, and of men who had voted against the Plebiscite in the House taking the stump in its behalf. Men became bedfellows who never were before and never will be again. The Reform organ, which hailed the an-

nouncement of the Plebiscite with shouts of welcome, sent out correspondents in an endeavor to defeat; while the Conservative mouthpiece, which at first thundered against the measure as the embodiment of political depravity, suddenly became silent, and the word was never again seen in its columns until it weekly published the returns. The smaller fry stood around the corners and waited.

Amid all the pother, the Anti-Prohibitionists, who could not be pulled by the politicians, for there were many men who voted for the Plebiscite who will never on earth vote for Prohibition—these sat perfectly unconcerned. The campaign was perfectly and absolutely one-sided. There was not a meeting held, not a speech made, not even a scrutineer appointed at the polls on their behalf. The whole thing simply went by default. And what was the result?

The Prohibitionists point, amid thunderous applause, to a majority of over eighty thousand. "A majority of 81,730 for Prohibition," is their claim. Up to Sir Oliver Mowat they marched and shouted, "The people are with us," and Sir Oliver made the best of the situation like a little man. Are the people with them? We opine that these good people are yelling before they have got out of the woods. Here are the figures:

Counties—	For.	Against.
Albion	2,008	491
Bruce	6,653	3,053
Carleton	2,901	1,015
Dufferin	1,973	999
Elgin	3,794	1,804
Essex	3,415	1,566
Frontenac	2,381	1,089
Kent	1,111	534
Haldimand	2,598	1,339
Halton	2,325	830
Hastings	4,638	1,000
Huron	7,420	1,008
Knox	2,833	2,945
Lambton	3,314	2,579
Lanark	2,936	1,332
Leeds and Grenville	2,936	1,332
Lennox and Addington	2,000	1,700
Lincoln	2,327	1,212
Midsex	7,199	3,061
Korfolk	3,204	1,217
Northumberland and Durham	2,901	1,015
Ontario	6,062	2,091
Oxford	2,598	1,339
Peel	2,659	1,501
Peterborough	2,598	1,339
Peterboro	2,544	1,000
Prescott and Russell	1,536	1,177
Prince Edward	1,465	1,165
Renfrew	2,504	3,780
Simcoe	2,504	3,780
Stormont, Dundas and Glenora	6,129	3,425
Victoria	3,901	4,259
Waterloo	3,901	4,259
Welland	2,891	1,532
Wellington	4,042	2,498
Westworth	3,526	1,407
York	4,005	2,841
Haliburton (provisional county)	368	211

Total Not majority for counties 154,099 83,846

The number of women who voted in the counties for Prohibition was 8,728, against 1,381.

Counties—	For.	Against.
Bellefleur	1,902	564
Brantford	1,902	564
Belleville	1,902	564
Hamilton	4,894	2,859
London	2,782	1,504
St. Catharines	3,005	2,305
St. Thomas	891	753
Stratford	719	461
Windsor	11,918	9,453
Trenton	674	778

Total 31,136 21,963  
The number of women who voted for Prohibition in the cities 3,091; against 724.

Districts—	For.	Against.
Muskoka	1,263	621
Maitland	415	188
Thunder Bay	259	396
Elgin River	324	232
Parry Sound	1,279	620
Nipissing	594	354
Algoma	580	453

Number of women voting for Prohibition in the Districts, 309; against, 42.

Separated towns—	For.	Against.
Chatham	875	667
Prescott	177	243
Aylmer	208	112
Trenton	208	112

Port Huron	294	28
St. Marys	368	31
Port Hope	491	31
Warton	251	11
Total	2,967	1,306

Number of women in separated towns for Prohibition, 396; against, 74.

Counties	For.	Against.
Cities	34,096	21,963
Towns	4,345	2,903
Separated towns	2,947	1,306
Police Island (a separate township not included in counties)	1	90

Total 42,390 26,262  
Total majority for Prohibition in Ontario, 81,730.

Upon the face of the returns these figures look substantial, though they are far from telling the whole story. The entire vote polled upon the Plebiscite was 303,244.

The total vote on the lists was 523,991. The entire vote fell 220,747 behind the vote on the lists.

The vote polled for Prohibition 192,487 fell 329,904 behind the total vote on the lists.

The total vote polled was 56 per cent. of the vote on the list, but the total vote polled for the Plebiscite was only 27 per cent. of the vote on the lists. Can 27 per cent. be in any shape twisted into "a majority of the people?"

In the cities 34 per cent. of the total vote on the list was in favor of the Plebiscite, and in the counties only 25 per cent. Does this show that the country is clamoring for Prohibition? It cannot be gainsayed that the Prohibitionists put forth every effort and that they polled every available vote. In fact, they polled thousands of votes of men who would never be with them in a real prohibitions contest. On the other hand, every vote unpollled was with equal certainty a vote against. The man who would not vote for the Plebiscite, certainly would not vote for Prohibition, nor would he be a factor in sustaining the law. The evidence is overwhelming that the only way in which a prohibitory law can be given even a measure of enforcement is by having an overwhelming sentiment of the people at the back of it.

But it may be contended that the total vote on the list is never polled. That argument hardly applies here. Every vote on the list favorable to the Plebiscite was polled, and every vote unpollled was undoubtedly as we have said, opposed both to Prohibition and the Plebiscite. But that there may be no escape we present herewith the vote polled in favor of the Plebiscite and the vote polled at the last general elections for the local legislature:

	In favor of Plebiscite	Polled at general election
Brant	6,062	6,062
Bruce	2,004	10,445
Carleton	2,901	2,901
Dufferin	1,973	2,459
Elgin	3,794	8,841
Essex	3,415	3,415
Frontenac	2,381	2,118
Kent	1,111	11,296
Haldimand	2,598	2,609
Halton	2,325	4,573
Hastings	4,638	9,092
Huron	7,420	12,271
Knox	2,833	6,518
Lambton	3,314	9,150
Lanark	2,936	6,453
Leeds and Grenville	2,936	6,453
Lennox and Addington	2,000	8,770
Lincoln	2,327	6,453
Midsex	7,199	12,709
Korfolk	3,204	6,066
Northumberland and Durham	2,901	12,563
Ontario	6,062	8,448
Oxford	2,598	6,127
Peel	2,659	3,905
Peterborough	2,544	9,019
Prescott and Russell	1,536	6,011
Prince Edward	1,465	7,281
Renfrew	2,504	6,555
Simcoe	2,504	9,019
Stormont, Dundas & Glenora	6,129	11,474
Victoria	3,901	7,008
Waterloo	3,901	3,506
Welland	2,891	6,011
Wellington	4,042	12,271
Westworth	3,526	6,043

Counties	56,062	9,019
Counties	368	268
Counties	1,111	1,100
Counties	4,894	4,818
Counties	2,782	3,218
Counties	3,005	3,112
Counties	891	3,112
Counties	719	3,112
Counties	11,918	31,166
Counties	674	1,231
Counties	12,409	33,109
Counties	1,231	1,231

This comparison is by no means fair. In the general elections the strong party constituencies, where the result is a foregone conclusion do not poll one-half of their votes. There are many of these. Then, again, there were three elections by acclamation, with these we have had to guess at the figures. But even with all these disadvantages the Plebiscite returns only show 180,045 as against 332,539 polled in the general elections.

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