

of temperance throughout the country." That is looking at the law precisely from the same standpoint as I have looked at it, and as hon. gentlemen opposite will, I think, look at it. He does not want a law that will be disastrous to the interests of temperance. "And, therefore, I think it would be decidedly in the interests of the whole community that any measure such as that, before it should become law, should be again submitted to the people, in order that they should have an opportunity of pronouncing yea and nay upon it." Precisely what we are doing, and no doubt what he would do if he were in this House, and no doubt every thoughtful temperance man believes we should pass a law, and submit that law to the people, in order to ascertain what public opinion is in regard to it. Having done so, then the law has full force and effect. It has the ratification of the people.

*The Objections Considered.*

Now, I propose considering for a few moments some of the objections we have heard. The first objection is the basis of voting. It is held by a great many that the decisive vote should be a majority of the votes polled. That view, as I showed in my argument in introducing the bill, has no substantial support among the leading temperance men in public life, nor among many temperance men who in the Church are supposed to represent the best sentiment of the various churches to which they belong. A bare majority of votes has not been advocated by any man of large experience in legislation, and is opposed by very many men of large experience in connection with religious and Christian work. The strongest authorities are against a bare majority of votes. We, therefore, are not disposed to submit the bill for ratification in that way. A bare majority may mean a small majority, as in the case of the Scott Act vote, as in the case of the last plebiscite in Ontario; it may mean a small percentage of the whole vote. You would, therefore, have a minority of the people putting into operation and giving life and vitality to a bill in regard to which there had not been an adequate expression of public opinion. In ordinary legislation that merely affects a few, that may be good and well, but in legislation so far-reaching, touching so many, touching those who are in business, touching those who are in public life, touching the social relations of a large number of our people, one can readily see how a law like that, born in weakness and feebleness, would only exist in a sickly and ineffective condition for some