

HALTON.—The anti-Scott-Act Petition.—This precious document was deposited in the Sheriff's office, here last Friday, one day prior to the date advertised, as the 28th was statutory holiday. There is said to be about 2,500 names on it, out of about 5,000 electors in the county. In ward number one, Trafalgar, thirteen names are on the petition twice; in Milton about forty are non-residents, repeated, died, removed, non-voters, and well-known Scott Act men. The petition is the clumsiest thing ever exposed to public gaze, names are repeated over and over again; names are on it of men who are dead nearly two years, or who have been that length of time away from the county; the same names are on the lists of two or three different municipalities; names of municipal voters are also on it; and after the thing has been thoroughly revised and corrected there will be scarcely more than 2,000 good names left. Of that number there are many who will vote against the petition. And this is the precious petition the people of Canada have heard so much about that indicates a change of sentiment in this county upon the Scott Act.—*Halton News*.

There can be little doubt that the opponents of the Scott Act are losing ground. The methods adopted by some of them are not calculated favorably to affect public sentiment; and the general impression is that the longer the agitation continues and the more the merits of the question are discussed, the larger the majority for the Act is likely to be.

The general feeling respecting the coming contest is that despite the enormous sums of money and the talented Anti-Scott-Act lecturers, reported to be placed at the disposal of the opponents of the Act in this county, Halton, noble, honest, law-abiding Halton, will stand true and firm in upholding the best interests of the people, spiritually, physically, and financially. Halton cannot be purchased. All the money in the possession of the whiskey party is not sufficient to induce the honest people of our county to sell their consciences. To think of such a thing for a moment would be to offer an unpardonable insult to the right-minded residents of the county. No! The Scott Act is law in Halton, and law it will be, until national Prohibition is proclaimed.—*Acton Free Press*.

Selected Articles.

DOES PROHIBITION PROHIBIT?

This is a question not infrequently propounded in the neighboring Union. And it is not always by those alone whose interests it is to inspire doubts as to its efficacy, that they may continue to profit by its absence. It would seem that not infrequently these who have shown a good temperance record are found in the Debatableland on this question. And when we consider the sophistries open on all questions, to men clever in argument, and the unscrupulousness of statement to which those engaged in so shady a traffic as that of liquor would resort, it is not so wonderful to find that the better judgment of temperance men should be temporarily clouded on the question.

When the assertion is made that prohibition does not entirely suppress the liquor traffic, it will be in order for carpers to condemn it. But that it does not do so is no more an argument against it than to assert that the laws prohibiting murder or theft are failures, because these crimes have not ceased to exist. The point at issue is: Is prohibition the most effective means of curtailing the liquor traffic? The best means of determining this is through the testimony furnished by those states which have adopted it. And as we are fast approaching the point when such a measure will be forcibly demanded by the people of Canada, it may be well to note the experience of those who have given prohibition a probation of no ordinary duration.

There is no better witness in evidence of the value, or otherwise, of prohibition, than the State of Maine. There the law has been in force since 1851, with what results the United States authorities, who may be supposed unbiased on the moral or immoral point of view of the question, are forced to testify in the most logical of arguments—figures. In the words of the "Living Issue" of Utica, N. Y. "It regards the question from a business point of view, and has no other intent or care than to get its allotted sum for revenue, out of every man who engages in the traffic; no matter whether he is in the business legally or illegally under the State

law; and hence exercise the most vigilance in watching for those who seek surreptitiously to carry on the sale. It is of the rarest occurrence that any man can sell intoxicants and escape detection by the United States officers; so rare as to be left out of the count here. Hence we are warranted in saying that the United States authorities collect revenue from the entire body of rum sellers in Maine, and that the amount of revenue collected is a fair and just basis by which to judge of the amount of liquor sold, or of the number of sellers within the State.

Now for the testimony. The United States revenue report shows that only four cents per inhabitant was collected on the manufacture and sale of liquor in Maine in 1882, while \$1.40 per inhabitant was the average for the whole Union. Can any stronger evidence be given in favor of prohibition."

This is supplemented by the evidence of the Rev. A. A. Phelps, who says:—"Prohibition has to some extent been tried, and it has proved a real success. Yes, it has been tried in Maine, and it has not "been found utterly inoperative." I might mention other states, countries, cities and towns where prohibition has done unmeasured good, but since we are challenged on Maine, let us confine ourselves to the old pine tree state. Let the reader understand that Maine has had nothing but statutory prohibition for about 30 years. The law had its loopholes and imperfections; but with all its weak points it has dried up all the breweries and distilleries of the State, closed nearly all the open saloons, and reduced the amount of liquor used to but a small fraction of what it was before. It has worked such happy results that the people are determined to have constitutional prohibition, and so place the matter beyond the power of a capricious legislature." Further proof of the power of prohibition to prohibit is furnished in the statistics collected by Jas. A. Troutman, of Topeka, Kansas, with reference to its results in that state. He wrote to every county attorney and superintendent and police judge in the state. Reports were received from 66 out of 81 counties, and from State authorities not temperance partisans. In these 66 counties the reduction in number of saloons, since the prohibitory law came into effect in 1851, has been from 708 to 313, of which latter number more than half are in the city of Leavenworth. In 41 counties there is not a saloon. The fines in that time have amounted to \$95,000, and 81 saloon keepers have been imprisoned. Surely such evidence as this may be regarded as confirmative of the value of Prohibition. But we can imagine a Prohibition, weak in conception, premature in adoption, and carefully administered the results of which would be to bring the measure into disrepute. What we need is the enactment of the law by the demand of a grand majority of the people, that fickle legislatures may not coquette with the measure session after session. And then we shall need that it be worked with the vigor that characterizes the efforts of those whose examples we have quoted in this article, if we desire to see it bring forth its best fruits. As the question of Prohibition is likely to take a prominent position in our body politics, in the near future we shall present from time to time such evidence as comes to us, confirmative of its value.—*Watchman*.

ONE OF THEIR STRONG ARGUMENTS.

Those who are setting their ingenuity at work to find strong arguments against prohibition make one of their great points of objection that a law, like the Scott Act, or any other similar prohibitory measure is almost sure to increase the amount of perjury, lying, deception, and systematic evasion of law wherever an attempt is made to enforce it. Very likely that is quite true. It is true also in regard to the law prohibiting theft, and it is true against nearly all the criminal laws in force in the country. A great many men now guilty of deception and perjury would not probably be guilty of these particular crimes at the particular times they now are but for the fact that some such course is necessary for them in order to escape the penalties of a violated law. Perhaps some of these men would seldom find it enter their hearts to resort to such iniquities were there no penalties against the acts they are committing. Would it be advisable, however, to repeal such laws as some men would sooner commit perjury than be punished under? There is the rub. Let such a policy be adopted and there would soon be a pretty general sweeping off of all the best criminal laws now on our statute books.—*Port Hope Guide*.