

"The Canada Temperance Act, commonly known as the Scott Act, has been passed in several counties and one city in the Province of Ontario, and your memorialists believe and know, that the votes of the electors have been given without that intelligent knowledge of the probable effects of the proposed legislation, which they can only obtain when full and reliable information of an official character is at their command. Statements and arguments directly contradictory and antagonistic were made and put forward, respectively by the supporters and opponents of the Act, and the electors being without reliable data by which to judge, were not in a position to bring to bear on the subject that intelligence which the deciding of a question of such moment required."

This same liquor party spent large sums of money in employing men and circulating literature to inform (?) the electors as to what the Scott Act is, and how it works, yet these electors are still "without reliable data." What sort of data have the Anti-Scott orators been furnishing to them? The electors were well informed by scores of earnest, truthful men on our side of the discussion; but one cannot help being amused at the coolness with which these men charge their own advocates with falsehood and at the same time deny the fact that the facts were fairly laid before the public by their opponents.

The second clause of this remarkable document reads as follows:—

"The terms of the Act provide that before it is voted upon a petition shall be signed by a certain percentage of the electors, the intent evidently being that the signing of the petition shall be purely voluntary, and that no coercion, intimidation, or other undue means should be used to procure signatures. Nevertheless, it is notorious that the petitions have been hawked about by the advocates of the Act, and electors have been coerced and intimidated into affixing their names thereto."

Well, let it be assumed for argument's sake that in some cases such a state of things did exist. There could be no such intimidation at the ballot-box. There, at least, the electors would express their opinions freely, and our opponents can point to no case in which our vote fell short of our petition. Stop! There was a petition gotten up by the liquor men in Halton praying to have the Scott Act repealed. They claimed to have more than two thousand names upon the petition, but they only polled 1767 votes in its favor. This does look as if some people had been induced to sign the petition by some influence from which they escaped when they got to the polls. An accusation is sometimes a confession: these men have made a very suspicious-looking accusation.

Many other statements in this strange petition are equally inconsistent and absurd. We have not space to deal with them in full. They merely restate long since refuted fallacies about our taxation, our barley market, etc., etc. As a specimen of the consistency that characterizes them, we subjoin some extracts from different parts of it, and respectfully ask the petitioners which of them we are to believe:—

1. From clause 4:

"Although the contrary is asserted by the advocates of the Act, it is a fact known to your memorialists that where the Act has been passed and an attempt has been made to enforce it, the consumption of liquor,—that is ardent spirits—has not diminished, but on the contrary has increased, and although the use of beer and wine has been greatly reduced, indeed has almost ceased, the increased consumption of ardent spirits has more than counterbalanced it."

2. From clause 8:

"Large stocks of liquors have been imported and manufactured on which large sums of money have been paid to the Government in the way of customs and excise duties, and the passage of the Scott Act seriously diminishes the value of these goods, and should the measure be generally adopted and enforced would make them unsaleable. * * * * * Breweries and distilleries have been erected at great expense with the sanction and encouragement of the Government and the passage of this Act, if it becomes general, would totally destroy the value of this class of property."

The petition closes with a series of requests in reference to which, and to the other documents presented and business transacted at the meeting, we shall have something further to say at another time.

Peterboro' comes to the front. Rev. B. B. Keefer, General Agent for the Alliance, has been laboring in this county for some time. The result of his efforts is that a general Convention for the county has been called to meet at Peterboro' town, on March 4th. Temperance sentiment is unusually strong, and a grand victory for the Scott Act is anticipated.

OUR APPEAL TO CÆSAR.

EXTRACTS FROM THE NATIONAL ADDRESS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE PROHIBITION PARTY.

Accepting as true the verdict of science and of experience, that alcohol is a poison, to be used as other poisons are used; Prohibition demands that the monstrous and destructive traffic in alcoholic drinks be suppressed; that the importation, exportation, manufacture, sale and supply of these drinks, being a system of wholesale poisoning and a gigantic crime, shall be outlawed, and the powers of government exerted to any necessary extent to destroy the traffic.

Prohibitionists contend that the determination of this question is the supreme issue in politics. In accordance with this view they entered the presidential canvass of 1884. They deferred their nominations until after all other parties had sent forth their platforms to the country, and made their nominations, when, finding that Prohibition was condoned by the democratic party and ignored by the republican, they nominated Hon. John P. St. John for president and Hon. William Daniel for vice-president upon a platform whose central plank was Prohibition. Their aim was to force this issue upon the attention of the people, and secure as many votes as possible for the candidates. They sought to make a beginning in the supreme work of determining how many are for Prohibition, and how many are opposed to it. They pushed their canvass with what means they could command. Their candidates and many others took the field and advocated their cause before the people. It was found that on the fourth of November nearly 151,000 votes had been cast and counted for the Prohibition candidates.

By a peculiar combination of circumstances these few votes became a matter of great importance, especially in the States of New Jersey, Connecticut and New York. These states, notably the latter, decided the election as between the two old parties. Messrs. Blaine and Logan, the republican candidates, were defeated by a plurality of 1,047 votes in New York, and the presidency passed, as the house of representatives had done two years before, to the democratic party, leaving only the senate in control of the republicans, and that by a bare majority.

When this fact became known, a most unexpected and surprising result followed. The Prohibition party were denounced without measure by the republicans. The angry clamor continued long and loud, St. John being burned in effigy in many places. At last the defeated party sought, by a most persistent and malicious libel upon Mr. St. John, to make the people believe that the Prohibition candidate had been willing to accept of bribes which republican leaders confess they sought to offer him. The most rational explanation of the treatment meted out to the Prohibition party since the election is that a hope was cherished that the party might be made odious and stamped out of existence. These efforts, in some form, may be expected to continue. The one thing which the advocates of the liquor traffic dread above everything else is the division of the voters into two parties—Prohibition and anti-Prohibition, and whatever can be done will be, to crush such a movement in its incipency.

We are not insensible to the attacks upon us and our party. We respect the sober and intelligent judgment of our fellow men. While we have no apologies to offer for the exercise of our rights as American citizens, we wish to explain that it was in no spirit of recklessness or intemperance that the Prohibition party acted in the late campaign. We had good and sufficient reasons. We do not admit that damage has been done to any righteous cause. It is true that if the Prohibitionists of New York, or a part of them, had ignored their principles and voted for Mr. Blaine, he would have been elected, but no one knew this on the day of election, and if it had been known, no valid reason could be assigned why a Prohibitionist should vote for Mr. Blaine rather than Mr. St. John. To the charges so passionately made we enter a general demurrer. In defense of our position, and as reasons for our action, we submit the following facts to a candid world:—

1st. The United States Government issued during the year ending October, 1884, 183,283 "special permits" to retail alcoholic drinks. They were issued in all the States; those in which it is a penal offense, by State law, to sell these drinks, as well as in others.

2nd. These represent nearly as many places where one or more persons make it their business to sell poisoned drinks, at large profit, to all whom they can induce to buy. As might be anticipated, every means is employed to secure customers. Not only men, but women and children are drinking in these "saloons."

3rd. The drinks vended are in demand for the alcohol they contain. Take away this drug from the beer, wine or whiskey sold, and no one would taste the liquid a second time. Of all the poisons known, none are so seductive as alcohol. Its first effect is to promote recklessness, its later effects are temporary madness and destructive disease, both physical and mental.

4th. The saloons and their owners are maintaining a constant war upon society. Maddened wretches reel from the saloons to the street, or to their homes to vent their insane caprices upon helpless women and children. Although society, at the expense of tens of millions, maintains a standing army of policemen, but little relief is afforded. The policeman is on the street; the madman is in his home where he is king, and can inflict nameless cruelties without molestation. Every thoughtful man is horrified almost daily by some frightful tragedy caused by alcohol, but only a small fraction of the cruelties and destruction it works comes to the light of day.

5th. The dram-shop is a school of crime. All its associations and teachings are low, debasing, brutal, tending to train up men in whom recklessness dominates the character, and ambition is to excel in brute force or in some form of crime. So numerous is this class that they constitute the problem of our civilization.