

that the various authorities have been fully alive to the opinions prevailing therein, and therefore I cannot conceive that there was any necessity for this paragraph in the Address. I will watch with a great deal of interest the propositions that the Government may have to lay before us on the subject, and if they are in the direction indicated, viz;—that of regulating the granting of shop, saloon and tavern licenses, I think that the Government will feel the subject is beyond their jurisdiction. The word "legislation" is adverted to in the judgment of their Lordships, but clearly shows that any legislation belongs to the local authorities, and that the Canada Temperance Act was within the purview of the Parliament of Canada, because it did not legislate in any way on that particular clause. It simply restrained and prohibited the use of liquor under certain circumstances; but in addition to that, there is a clause of the Canada Temperance Act of 1878, which recognised the licensing system, and where, in one instance, power is given to parties in a municipality to manufacture Canadian wine in order to sell it. The local authorities may grant licenses to do so, thereby clearly showing, within that very Act, that this Parliament recognised that the licensing system belongs to the local authorities. So far as the Province of Ontario is concerned, where the only agitation—if any such may be said to exist—has existed, the effect of the legislation transferring the licenses from the municipalities to Parliament or to the Government has been most beneficial. The figures are those which go to show that since 1874 the number of licenses issued in the ratio of population has largely diminished, and that at the present time it is 42 per cent. less than it was in 1874,—that is the proportion of diminution as compared with 1874, anterior to the present system. What is known as the Crooks' Act came into operation in 1875 or 1876, and when it did, its immediate effect was to reduce the issue of licenses very largely. The regulations and restrictions imposed on the licensing system by that Act have met with the approbation, not only of temperance men, but of all men who take an interest in restraining that traffic within the narrowest possible limits. I have myself a number of figures which go to prove what I am arguing, but a more

fitting opportunity may possibly arise to go into this subject when this legislation is brought down. In the meantime, I must enter my protest against the assumption that the Government has any power whatever to legislate on the subject of licenses.

It may be that this paragraph is thrown out for a purpose at the present moment. It is very well known that an election is about taking place in Ontario and this question is one which has evoked a good deal of discussion on both sides, and an endeavor has been made to show that the legislation of the Ontario Administration has had the effect of developing the liquor traffic. Now it has done nothing of the sort; it has had just the opposite effect, and the figures prove most conclusively that the effect of the Crooks' Act has been to restrict licensing and to increase the spread of temperance; and any man whose attention has been diverted to that subject, who has noted the changes in the times, year after year, can come to no other conclusion. I may here say, that a most important body of people in this country—a body which comes second in point of numbers among the religious population of the Dominion—I mean the Methodist body—at a late meeting of their Conference, passed a resolution, urging upon their members to exert their best energies in order to prevent the control of the licensing system reverting to the municipalities. I venture to say, the opinion of the leading clergymen and members of the Church of England, who take an interest in this subject, would be in the same direction, and I know, as a matter of fact, that the dignitaries of the Church to which I belong, in both Provinces, are of that opinion. The Archbishop of Toronto cordially endorsed that resolution, and believes that the effect of the legislation by the Local Parliament has been to restrain largely the spread of intemperance. This is the condition of things that this Parliament has been called upon to transform, because there are some parties—the licensed victuallers—who are dissatisfied with it, and who certainly cannot be said to be anxious to restrain the use of intoxicating liquors; and as I stated before, such a Bill will be entirely nugatory, and will simply lead to a fraud upon the people of this country. No