

slaughter, 400 per cent; murderous assaults, something like 300 per cent. He says that Maine seems to head the calendar in the North-East for an increase in criminal offences; and he concludes by saying that a community where crime, immorality and suicide are rapidly increasing is surely verging towards barbarism. He says that in Portland there are 130 rum shops, that intoxication is rife there, that there is more drinking than ever before, and that this prohibitory legislation has utterly failed to carry out the intention of its promoters. Is it unfair to assume that if we pursue the same course here we shall have the same result? I think we may fairly assume, that what little we have seen of the working of prohibitory legislation amongst us, shows how very rapidly we may arrive at the unfortunate state of things that prevails in Maine. I shall read a short extract or two from one of the most influential organs of public opinion in this country. The article states so strongly and so succinctly the evil of this legislation, that I felt when I read it that I should do better to read it to this House instead of making any remarks of my own, because it states the case so much better than I can do it. It says:

"An evil of this kind of legislation is that the evading of it is hardly ever felt to be a moral offence; hence it can never be really enforced, and the convictions can only be obtained by means of personation, lying and dirty devices. The litigation caused by it is exceedingly costly, and it familiarizes the people with perjury, mendacity and transgression of the law. . . . But, say the gentlemen of the Alliance, by these laws we make drinking disreputable, and drive it out of sight. Drunkenness is indeed disreputable; but it is our growing good sense, the advancing civilization, and the power of Christianity, not prohibitory legislation, which have made it so. And if you drive drinking into secret places, after all, have you gained very much? It is like sweeping a litter under the table and boasting that you have cleaned the room. . . . The Scott Act is financially extravagant, morally debasing, and totally unworkable, and will, we trust, in its present shape at least be rejected by the good sense of the people of Canada as likely rather to hinder than to help the cause of temperance."

Well, Sir, these are remarks that I think cannot be contradicted. Then, again, with regard to Portland, it says:

"The advocates of prohibition point to poverty, disease, lunacy and crime, and claim that the passage of prohibitory laws will diminish if not extinguish them. The simple and complete answer to this is—that as a matter of experience such legislation has always increased them. In the State of Maine prohibition has been the law for over twenty-five years, and the statistics show a steady growth in the number of paupers, lunatics and drunkards. Portland, before the passage of the prohibitory law, with a population of 24,000, averaged 300 drunkards a year; in 1876, with a population of 35,000, the number of drunkards was 1,640."

I may say with regard to the city in which I live, Toronto, the proportion of drunkards to the population is only one-half as great as it is in Portland. Then again:

"Another main argument of the Prohibitionists is, that if you forbid the use of alcoholic liquors you so enrich the community that direct taxes more than recoup the loss to the excise. Facts show indisputably that under prohibition the consumption of ardent spirits is vastly increased, as are pauperism and lunacy. Under the Dunkin Act the municipalities lost their revenue from licences, and got absolutely nothing in return, nay, had to pay the saintly whiskey detectives, who traded their wholly fictitious illnesses and fatigue on the unsuspecting benevolence of the deluded publican. What sane politicians would consent to abandon the excise revenues, which commend themselves heartily to public sentiment, for a supposed increase in the national wealth which is contradicted by all experience? We wish to guard ourselves here from misapprehension. We admit heartily that if our people did not use alcoholic liquors they would grow richer; our contention is that successful prohibition is impossible, and the unsuccessful attempt deprives the Government of revenue, fosters immorality, protects adulteration, and benefits no one but the wily politician, who makes it a tool to carve out his own slice from the national pudding."

Then here are a few words which I commend to those gentlemen who seek to make a nation temperate by means of this prohibitory law. Let them heed these words because they are pregnant with meaning:

"The action of moral and spiritual remedies is undoubtedly slow, because they depend for their efficiency on the co-operation of the human will. Christianity, after nearly nineteen centuries, has much of its work yet to do, but that is no impeachment of its truth and ultimate efficacy. The legitimate work of temperance is tedious perhaps, in its operation, but that is no excuse for drastic remedies which will endanger the life of a patient. In spite of the pessimists the world is advancing, and our race

is growing in self-restraint, in manliness and nobility of character. We counsel the friends of temperance to patience and perseverance; and it is because we desire to see their efforts directed into a channel which will lead to success, because we heartily sympathize with their object, that we denounce such legislation as the Scott Act, on the ground that it is immoral, unworkable, mischievous where enforced, and an enemy to the best interests of society."

I expected to be asked this question, and I may say here that the *Toronto Mail* is the most influential organ of public opinion in the Dominion of Canada, at least in the Province of Ontario. It has a circulation of 70,000. It is conducted on business principles, and its object is to echo the honest sentiment of the people; that it has done so in politics we have ample evidence. It sounded the tocsin of the National Policy, and echoed the people's wish there. It was not far astray on the great scheme we have just carried through Parliament. But then, it may be said, these are political matters on which the paper represented the opinions of a party. But here is a matter in the interests of society, and the common well being of the country, and its managers would be fools if they ran counter to public opinion. I believe that paper echoes public sentiment as correctly on this matter as it did in the political issues to which I have referred.

Mr. ROSS. The *Mail* elected the Mayor of Toronto in the last municipal election.

Mr. BOULTBEE. If you cannot show anything against the influence of the *Mail* better than the election of the Mayor in Toronto, I think the *Mail* will be able to stand alone and run yet. The *Mail* is sneered at because it is a political organ, but I do not see why a newspaper which takes a sound stand on political matters may not take a sound stand on matters other than political. Here is an extract from one of the first living thinkers in this country or in Great Britain—I refer to Goldwin Smith. I suppose there is no publicist in either country whose writings have so much influence on the public mind. He says:

"We come back always to the same thing. Sumptuary legislation cannot be enforced in a free community. The Czar Peter might have compelled his subjects to give up brandy as he compelled them to cut off their beards. He needed no aid from public sentiment to give effect to his ukase. But in a free community your law without public sentiment is a dead letter. Prohibitionists may be ready to call upon the Government for vigorous measures, but not one in ten of them would himself help the police in interfering with the private habits of his neighbors. Mere self-indulgence, however injurious to the man himself, is not an offence against the State, and people in general cannot be induced to treat it if it were. Some persons hold tobacco to be a slow poison; others hold meat to be the same, as, if used in the excessive quantities in which many people use it, undoubtedly it is. Suppose the anti-tobaccoists or the vegetarians to be everywhere in a majority, will it be their duty to close by law the shops of the tobaccoists and butchers? If we want to change the diet or the habits of freemen, we must do it by argument and example. The end will not be so quickly attained as it would be by the ukase of the despot, but the work will be the more genuine, more lasting, and more truly moral."

In the *Bystander* and other works of the same writer, and I dare say hon. gentlemen have read them, Mr. Goldwin Smith takes the same view I have taken to-night, in fact I have taken my views largely from him. I take another article written by a public man of considerable note in this country, and published in *Belford's Magazine* of 1876, and from that article I will read the following short extract:—

"The Prohibitory Liquor Law thoroughly enforced would, I have never doubted, contribute more to the wealth of the State and the welfare of society than all the other of our Statutes put together. But if this law be enacted before public sentiment is prepared to enforce it, it must divert the attention of temperance men from the vigorous and individual employment of those moral influences which alone can give development and power to public sentiment. I affirm that its influence in New England has been disastrous up to this time."

That is taken from a work entitled "Fifty Years History of the Temperance Cause," by Mr. Stebbins. Well, Mr. Speaker, I have read quotations from the *Mail*, from Mr. Goldwin Smith, and from a distinguished publicist, but they are not alone. We look around in every rank of society where the great thinkers are, where we find men moulding