

# Acton Free Press.

THURSDAY MORNING, JULY 24, 1884.

## Notes and Comments.

The U. S. House Committee of Foreign Affairs have reported a resolution asking the President to negotiate for the renewal of the Canadian reciprocity treaty.

The anti-prohibitionists of the Western States have offered E. King Doda, of Toronto, twenty thousand dollars for one hundred lectures on the liquor question. This poor doomed traffic has very few public advocates, and these few seem to have their hands full at their own wage.

The first election on the Scott Act in Quebec took place last Friday, and resulted in an overwhelming victory for the Act. Arthabaska, the county referred to, adopted the Act by a majority of over 1300 votes. Campaigns are in progress in the counties of Brome, Stanstead and Sheffield, in the same Province.

There is no spontaneity in the opposition to the Scott Act. There are scores of men in this County ready to speak for and work for the passage of the Act, without even the dream of pecuniary reward. Can the same be said of the other side? That there are some good citizens and sincere Christians who conscientiously think the present system of license better than prohibition, we have no doubt. We give them full credit for honesty and a desire for the public welfare. We note, however, that the soul of the active opposition to the movement, in this and in other counties, is the "trade." It is thoroughly alarmed. The "silver mine" business is in danger. —*Brimpton Banner.*

## The Boundary Question.

**ONTARIO'S CLAIMS SUSTAINED.**  
The argument in the Ontario Boundary case before the judicial committee of the Privy Council closed on Tuesday. Before their retirement the committee stated that they would present a report to the Queen-in-Council on the whole case, at the same time intimating that they would recommend a boundary practically the same as that awarded by the arbitrators. This is the fifth constitutional case settled before the Privy Council in favor of Ontario within a few months.

## Doctors the Repeal Petition.

Referring to the petition for the repeal of the Scott Act in Halton, presented to the Governor-in-Council, last week, the *Ontario Free Press* says:—"The repeal petition was deposited in the Sheriff's office at Milton, on June 27, and remained there till July 12. The petition is declared to contain many errors, the names of present non-residents and deceased voters, and with its proceeding have been committed other irregularities. The Scott Act people believe the petition is illegal, because the sheriff after the time for filing had expired, allowed it to be mutilated, added to, and radically changed. It appears that after the petition was filed, the repealers found that the provisions of the order in council passed on January 31, 1881, providing certain forms whereby the names of voters could be easily traced, had not been complied with. They then took the petition, although filed and beyond their control, and changed its form, hacked and mutilated it so that it did not resemble the original petition. They then added printed matter. The fight to get the Dominion Government to reject the petition for repeal will be long and bitter; and a strong deputation of representative temperance men from Halton is to come here in a few days to urge the government to refuse the prayer asking for the taking of a repeal vote."

## An Important Question.

*To the Editor of the Free Press.*  
Dear Sir,—There is perhaps no question, whether it be moral, political or religious, that is taking such a hold upon the public mind at the present time as the question of Temperance. The truly thoughtful people of our country are opening their eyes to the fact that it is not safe to drink intoxicating liquors even moderately; that intemperance is slowly, yet, nevertheless, surely, winding its deadly meshes around many of the noblest men of our land; that our sons and daughters are not safe from the tempting allurements of the wine cup in short, that at the present stage of the history of our country, Prohibition has become a necessity. And although the country may not be altogether ready for it, yet it is ripening fast, and the harbinger that will usher it in, is the noble Scott Act, one of the best laws ever recorded in our statute books.  
I am glad that, I live in the county of Halton. It is the banner county of the Province that has come nobly to the front and said let us have temperance. "May she never trail her colors in the dust. And now after two years of fairly successful working of the 'no license system,' the anti-temperance party are petitioning Parliament for a repeal of the Act. The question now stares us in the face: Shall we return to the license system, or shall we not? A thousand times no, say I. What returns to a system that is so fraught with fearful consequences; return to a system that is sapping the very life blood of the nation. Enough of this in the past. It is high time that we should retrace our steps and get right on this question. Enough gullible ready lies fit the door of the nation without legalizing the traffic any longer. It behooves the people of our noble county to renew the efforts begun three years ago, to drive this evil from our midst.  
In conversing with different persons on this question we find some opposed to the Act on the ground that it cannot be made universal. They say that it is a measure to prohibit the manufacture and sale also, and we will vote for it. Now, I question if these same parties would vote

for Prohibition if it should be submitted; but they would then have some other excuse. The devil is always ready to suggest some way out of the difficulty. It has been so in all great moral reforms in the past, and I suppose will be to the end of the chapter.

It cannot be apparent to every thinking person, that much is depending, just now, upon the action of the people of Halton as to whether the Scott Act shall be successful in a large number of counties that are at present agitating the question with the view to voting upon it, providing the repeal vote is taken soon. Numerous letters are being received by parties throughout the county from persons in other counties asking for information as to the working of the Scott Act, stating that reports had been circulated that it was a failure—that business was ruined, and other kindred assertions, none of which we believe. No man that is possessed of a reasonable amount of common sense, can but admit that the less he spends for liquor the more he will have for the necessities and luxuries of life; and hence, all kinds of legitimate business will be, more or less, benefited by it. If he abstains altogether, he is a better man morally, mentally and physically. He is better qualified for business, a better citizen every way. Fathers of Halton, will you not thoughtfully and reverently consider this question? Doubtless the sin of intemperance is one of the sins mentioned in Holy Writ that are visited upon the children, &c. Then, firstly, touch not! taste not! handle not, that which withers, blights and destroys. Secondly, throw a safe-guard around your sons and daughters by voting down the repeal. Let the influence exerted by you in your homes and in your community be on the side of right. By all that you hold sacred and dear, remember that in the coming contest a terrible responsibility rests upon us as a people for good or evil, as to how we exercise our right of franchise. If the act is sustained, as we trust it will be, then the influence which we throw around us will help other counties to carry the Act, and soon, very soon, we will be in a position to ask for and successfully carry a measure to prohibit the manufacture and sale all over the Dominion.

"Hasten, Lord, the happy day,  
When, beneath Thy gentle ray,  
Temperance all the world shall sway,  
And reign triumphant!"  
Had I a voice like thunder, that its tones might be heard through the length and breadth of the land, this would be the burden of my cry: Parents! guard your children from the seductive influences of the intoxicating cup.  
"If I were a voice, a persuasive voice,  
That could travel the wide world through,  
I would fly on the wings of the morning light,  
And speak to men with a gentle might,  
And tell them to be true, be true,  
And tell them to be true."

Thanking you, Mr. Editor, for space.  
Yours faithfully,  
ALLEN  
Georgetown, July 22nd, 1884.

## Surrogate Court Overcharges.

The following letter, embodying the result of investigations by the inspector of Surrogate Courts, in a case where overcharging by a court official was suspected, appeared in last issue of the *Western Chronicle*, and having reference to the general public, we give a place in our columns. We are pleased to be able to say, however, that as far as the Surrogate Court of our own county is concerned, complaints of any kind are very infrequent, and the officials in charge enjoy the full confidence of the people having business with them:—

*To the Editor of the Chronicle.*  
Dear Sir,—A case of more than ordinary interest having arisen in connection with the fees charged by the registrar of the Surrogate Court at Stratford, and as it would appear from the result of a recent Governmental investigation that fees in excess of the tariff fixed by law are also charged by the Registrars of such Courts in other Counties, I deem it right that the result of the investigation in this case should be made public.

On the 17th of June last, I transmitted the Will papers (duly proved) of one Kessel, of Stratford, to the Registrar of the Surrogate Court at Stratford, asking for a statement of the fees required to probate the same, and was informed by return mail that the sum of \$21 was required. As the personality in this case only amounted to the sum of \$600, my knowledge of the charges usually made, and the fact that this same officer had some time ago made an overcharge of several dollars in a similar case transmitted by me, I felt that the time had come when an investigation into his manner of making a formal complaint to the Registrar of another County, asking what his charges would be on a short will, where the personality was \$600, and got his reply to send \$12.25. I then entered a formal complaint with the Provincial Secretary who at once instructed the Inspector of such offices to enquire into and report upon the charges made by the Registrar of the S. C. at Stratford, and the Provincial Secretary has forwarded me the Inspector's Report, which is as follows:—

Toronto, 9th July, 1884.  
Sir,—I have the honor to inform you that pursuant to instructions I have enquired into certain overcharges made by the Registrar of the Surrogate Court of the County of Perth in connection with his fees for proving the will of one Kessel, and beg to report as follows:—

His fees as charged amount to the sum of \$21.15, and are made up as follows:—  
1. Application..... \$5  
2. Receiving and entering Certificate of Surrogate Clerk..... 10  
3. Preparing papers..... 1.00  
4. Postage forwarding same to Linwood..... .30  
5. Grant..... 2.50  
6. Three copies of will..... 3.00  
7. Probate under seal of court..... 50  
8. Notice of grant to Sur. Clerk..... 25  
9. Drawing order for Judge..... 10  
10. Attending Judge for Order..... 50  
11. Postage on Returns..... 50  
12. Stamp..... 4.50  
13. Judge Fees..... 7.50

\$21.15  
Of these I allow items numbered 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 11 and 13 for No 6, the Will being only 5 folio long. Unallowable items numbered 5 and 10 under the authority of E. D. D. 29, 2 & 482. The remaining items being those numbered 5, 12 and 13, depend upon the value of the property devolving under the Will and varies accordingly.

The personal estate devolving under the Will is valued at \$600. The real estate is derived to Executors to hold for the benefit of the testator's widow during her widowhood and afterwards to sell same and divide the proceeds as directed therein. It is valued at about \$6,500. The Registrar, Mr. McFadden, in explanation of these charges informed me that he had been accustomed to charging fees upon the value of such real estate the same as if it were personalty. The Judge of the County Court of the County of Perth, as also several of the other County Court Judges holding that such a device converted the realty into personalty, and that they were therefore entitled to fees on it as such. This is as I informed the Registrar contrary to the opinion of the Honourable the Attorney General upon the subject, a copy of which I have forwarded to him, as also to the other Surrogate Registrars now under my jurisdiction with the intimation that I would require these fees to be charged in accordance with such opinion. These items numbered 5, 12, 13, although correct under the dictum of some of the County Court Judges will therefore be reduced to \$11.50 and 48 respectively. I have added 50c. for a certificate required under the Statute to be attached to the Will by the Registrar, to which he is entitled, thus making the correct fees amount in all to the sum of \$10.55. The Registrar has signified his willingness to accept this sum in full of all fees when tendered.

From this report it will be seen that this Officer in this case demands fees 100 per cent over the legal tariff. It will also be seen that such overcharges were not confined to this case, similar charges having been systematically made in that fact, it would appear, with the approval of the County Judge.

If this system of overcharging was confined to this one official, and to one county, the evil or grievance would not be so bad, but from the statements made by him to the Inspector, and from the fact that the Registrar of another County demanded \$13.25 instead of \$10.55, or an excess of \$2.70 over the proper fees from me to probate such a will, we are led to conclude that this business of overcharging by the Registrars of our Surrogate Courts covers a much wider area than the County of Perth, and it is high time that the people should wake up and demand that an evil of such apparent magnitude should be at once abated.

Yours, &c.,  
A. BOOMER.

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about fifteen days, we are determined to reduce our stock, and intend offering Big Bargains in all

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