

they were engaged was one which offered strong temptations to the poor man to spend his week's earnings, to the injury of his family. It was to protect this class, that these wise restrictions had been imposed. As regarded the limiting of the number of licenses, this was a matter within the jurisdiction of the municipal councils, and those bodies were quite competent to exercise a wise discretion in the matter. He thought the Legislature at Ontario would act most unwisely, if at its first meeting it agreed to do away with the salutary restrictions which previous Legislatures had placed upon the liquor traffic.

Mr. COYNE said that on one point on which a change was sought by the petitioners he had had some experience, and that experience led him to differ entirely from the views which had been announced by the members for West Durham and South Wellington—he alluded to the restriction as to the number of licenses. In many small villages and towns the number of licenses allowed was not enough for the requirements and necessities of the place. On many occasions when there were public gatherings in the place where he resided (Brampton), the amount of accommodation was found quite insufficient. If a person wished to invest a large amount of money in building a first-class hotel in one of these places, he was prevented by the present state of the law, as he had no guarantee that he would get a license for the house, even if it were to be kept in a superior manner. The allotted number of licenses were in the hands of others, keeping more humble taverns, who, if they kept them respectably, had a vested right in their licenses which could not well be taken from them. He did not believe any good to the temperance of a community had ever resulted from limiting the number of bars in a municipality. Those who were prone to intemperance would find the means of gratifying their

passion, whether you limited the number of taverns or not. No Act of Parliament could make a people moral. As for the law about closing at seven o'clock on Saturday, it had been found utterly impracticable to carry it out. In his own county, and in the adjoining counties it had never been done—while on the other hand it encouraged a system of legalized immorality worse than that which arose from the liquor traffic itself, by parties going in on Sunday and getting liquor on false pretences, and then going to lodge informations. He thought there should be no special bar in the way of tavern-keepers getting civil offices, any more than any other classes of the community. It might be, as the member for Huron had stated, that they might be debarred from municipal office, from the fact of their having contracts in the way of a license. Whether the law would bear the construction thus put upon it, he (Mr. Coyne) was not prepared to give an opinion. The petitions, at all events, should be allowed to go to the municipal committee, that they might there receive that fair consideration to which they were entitled.

Mr. WILSON was fully aware from all his experience in municipal matters, that if hotel keepers got the privileges now asked for them, there would be a much worse state of society than at present. Honourable gentlemen had better pause before sanctioning such a measure as that proposed.

Hon. Mr. CAMERON said that all that was asked was that the petition before the house be considered. It so happened that he was as strict a teetotaler as any one in the country. And the question with him—as it ought to be with all—was how can temperance best be promoted? The petitioners aver that present regulations promote intemperance. Was not the point here raised a fair subject of inquiry? There could be no doubt that it was in the unlicensed, rather than the licensed, houses, that the great evil was done. It was to be hoped therefore that the motion of the Treasurer for the courtesy of an inquiry would be acceded to.

Mr. BOYD said that the only object of the temperance men was, at as early a stage as possible, to put on record their views. And had not the Treasurer detailed his views on the subject of the suppression of intemperance, the debate would not have sprung up.

Hon. Mr. WOOD contended that the temperance men endeavoured to push matters too far, and some of them were, no doubt, astonished that the introduction of the petition was allowed at all. So long as the manufacture of liquor was allowed, and Government derived a revenue from it, so long would the licensed liquor-sellers have to be protected. They were a large section of the community,

and the views they advanced on a subject of much importance were deserving a hearing.

Mr. GOW explained that he too had been led to state his views in consequence of the expression of opinion given by the hon. the treasurer; and had, of course, no objection to the motion.

Mr. McKELLAR remarked that the arguments used by the hon. member for Peel in support of his position were of anything but a convincing character. First, he avowed that the law had not, he thought, been observed in his district, and hence ought not to be on the statute-book. Then he averred that he did not believe legislation would ever advance Christianity or temperance. Now the hon. gentleman might fairly be presumed to know better at his time of life. He might be supposed to be acquainted with the fact that morality and religion had been advanced by wise legislation, and that Sabbath-breaking, murder and every other crime were repressed as far as possible by Act of Parliament. That portion of the Bill which regulated the closing of bar-rooms at a certain hour had been copied from the Forbes-Mackenzie Act, which had been successfully in operation in Scotland for a number of years; and where that law was in operation in Canada its results were said to be beneficial. It was also urged in effect by the mover of the motion, that because unlicensed groggeries were selling liquor all night, that therefore licensed houses should be able to do so also.

Hon. Mr. WOOD would correct the hon. member. What he (Mr. Wood) had observed was, that shutting up at seven o'clock p.m. was not generally observed in towns and cities, and that it would be better they should be allowed to remain open till ten o'clock, and open at any hour they pleased in the morning.

Mr. McKELLAR—In other words, that not only should the unlicensed dispensers of that which too frequently resulted in disease and death be allowed to pursue their traffic, but that the licensed men should be allowed to assist in the evil work. It was urged again that the issue of licenses should be unlimited. He was free to confess his opinion was that it would be better to remove the restrictions, and allow an unlimited number of licenses. He would raise the licenses, and make the penalty on those attempting to sell without a license of the severest character. For the first offence the punishment ought to be a fine, for the second imprisonment, and for the third offence they should be sent to the Penitentiary. He believed there would be far less crime if the qualifications of taverns were made higher—that is, their accommodations increased—and if those breaking the law regarding the sale of liquors received such severe punishment as he had proposed. As to the disability clause, it had been on the statute book for a number of years, and had placed men in this line of life in the same position as the judges of the land. But for his part he would not object to see the disability removed. At present, tavern keepers wishing to get into municipal councils evaded the law and secured their seats, so that practically the disability amounted to nothing. Besides, the house would not, he thought, be disposed to repeal another clause in the Act which said—and said wisely—that no man should hold a seat who had directly or indirectly a contract with the Corporation. Now, it would be impossible for a tavern-keeper to be there without being a contractor. He must be a party to fix the amount of license he had to pay, and then he must make a bond to himself that he will abide by the provisions of the by-law. That clause he did not think any gentleman was prepared to repeal; so that, in fact, were the clause these men ask to be repealed, struck out, they would be in no better position to enter municipal councils than at present. While on this question, he would allude to a statement he had heard to the effect that in the saloon below their chamber liquor was sold—and sold without license.

The SPEAKER stated that it was coffee, and not spirituous liquor, which was sold there.

Mr. McKELLAR was very glad to hear it. As for the matter before the House, he would vote for the reference of the petition to a committee.

Hon. Mr. WOOD would inform the hon. gentleman that the petition also referred to another important point, and that was that the decision of two magistrates should be final and without appeal. It had been found that those selling without license very often