

of the patients in insane asylums and 50 per cent. of the denizens of prisons were there directly or indirectly through the use of strong drink. He hoped the introducer of the Bill would take a vote on its second reading, and then it could be amended in Committee.

Mr. WOOD (Brant) said that the House and the country must be obliged to the hon. member for North Norfolk, and also the hon. member for South Ontario, for bringing the question of temperance so prominently forward. Notwithstanding, however, the declaration made by the introducer of the Bill now under discussion, that the use of ardent spirits was on the increase, and notwithstanding the great amount of information on the subject that that gentleman possessed and the statements *per capita* made by that gentleman, he (the speaker) begged most submissively to demur from him altogether. The temperance men and the temperance organizations, and other persons anxious for the well-being of the country, whether they belonged to these organizations or not, had given expression to the hope that the public sentiment of this country, which was the sanction of all law, would be brought to that point that the vending of liquor, except for medicinal, manufacturing, and mechanical purposes, would be done away with. (Hear, hear.) The advocacy of this sentiment and principle had forced itself upon Ministers of the Gospel, and the earnest desire for legislation prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquor had brought itself home to every judge in the land and to every magistrate. Grand jurors have had their attention directed to the evil effects of the liquor traffic from their examinations of gaols, and had brought in reports continually showing the direful calamities brought upon the mind and body of man by the use of ardent liquors. Our Gaol Inspector had submitted to us the fact that out of a gaol population of six thousand, five thousand were inmates of the criminal institutions in consequence of the use of intoxicating drinks. The Inspectors of Lunatic Asylums in the United States and Great Britain showed that three-fifths of the lunacy was directly traceable to the same cause. For every five men charged with grave offences and high felony, four of them had been brought to that ignominious condition through the direct influence of intoxicating drinks and its surroundings. These facts were attested to by Ministers of the Gospel and medical men—attested to by the Judges of the country who had tried criminals in the dock, and by grand jurors who had inspected our gaols and examined into the causes which brought persons to those places; attested to also by all who had powers of observation, because they forced themselves upon the observation of every one. He was alluding now only to the physical effect of drink upon the population, for he should leave it to the hon. member for South Ontario to dwell upon the moral aspect of the case. If the mind was immortal in its nature, if the impressions made upon it and the training it received were to remain through all eternity, as we were taught they were, what was the effect produced upon the mind of man by the liquor traffic? The case might be destroyed, but if the jewel itself which it contained was also destroyed, the loss would be very great. He would refer to another aspect of the case. He had collected voluminous notes on the subject, but when he spoke upon so important a matter he forgot all about the notes and was rushed along with it, for it had sufficient momentum to carry him along, and certainly he needed no notes to carry him along. The absolute material loss in this country, through the use of intoxicating drink, was greater than through any other cause. Four fifths of the pauperism was the effect of this evil. The figures that he had before him were astounding. In 1871 there was a total of 325,400,000 gallons of foreign and home-manufactured liquor consumed in the United States. That quantity if put upon waggons, ten barrels to a waggon, and each waggon with team occupying a space of thirty feet, they would reach from Boston to San Francisco and back again; or it would be enough to fill a canal fourteen feet wide, four feet deep, and one hundred miles long. To estimate the amount of money invested in liquor baffled our comprehension; but the money thus spent would go far enough in two years to pay off the national debt of the United States. As it was spent now, it left no assets behind, except in the insane asylums, in the work-houses, in the gaols, and in the lanes and the alleys, where death and destruction, moral and physical, acted upon the whole atmosphere. (Hear, hear.) He did not wonder at temperance men becoming monomaniacs on the subject, for he believed that he himself would become crazy should his mind dwell upon the question. Such

was the force, however, of public opinion that he thought there was scarcely a representative in this House who was not prepared to take hold of the subject with a vigour that they never felt before; but such were the circumstances that surrounded the question that any Act of Parliament that might be passed, restraining the evils of the liquor traffic must be enforced with the strongest arm of power. In the Act which he had had passed through the House there were many valuable provisions, but they had remained nearly a dead letter upon the statute book, because they were not properly enforced. The Treasurer had introduced a measure amending that License Act, but it would be like putting a ragged old patch upon an old garment. (Laughter.) In the Act introduced by the member for North Norfolk and in the one introduced by the member for South Ontario were the materials and provisions which would make a Bill which, passed into law and backed up by a police force under the control of the Government, would effectually meet the evil. He was in favour of putting such a law on the statute book which the evils of the liquor traffic called for, but such a law would make such radical changes that he could scarcely expect that at such a stage of the session the Government would be prepared to come down with such a measure, and it should not be done unless success loomed in the distance to regenerate mankind. (Hear, hear.) A strong expression of opinion on the subject was desirable, and the Government might set their house in order so that a Bill of the kind asked for could be introduced. Regarding the constitutionality of such a law, we had power to deal with questions affecting the preservation of the life and health of our people, and police regulations were made by us, and certainly therefore it came within the province of this Legislature to pass a prohibitory law. It came within the power of the States of the American Union; and it had been attested in the Supreme Court there. To the honour and glory of that Court it had declared that not only upon technical grounds had the States the right to pass prohibitory laws, but it would be sorry to see any country which had not the power to protect its people from what was a foul destroyer of its race. (Hear, hear.) He hoped that we should soon do away with the sale of intoxicating liquors from one end of the Province to the other, except for manufacturing, medicinal, and mechanical purposes. (Applause.) Without going into statistics—without going into arguments which rolled up mountains high, he would conclude his observations by expressing the hope that if we could not have a prohibitory measure this session we would have one next session, and that it would be enforced in every corner of the Province, if it would cost a million of dollars to do so. (Applause.) When it came to that point, the expense attending its first introduction could be gradually withdrawn, for public sentiment would be all that would be required for the proper carrying out of the law. (Loud cheers.)

Mr. LAUDER wanted to know how Mr. Wood could speak as he had just done, seeing that he had, in a recent debate, declared that it was not possible to cure intemperance by legislation. He did not believe in sham resolutions. If this were carried to a second reading the Government should take it up as a matter of policy. It would do away with the Inebriate Asylum at once. The measures of the Government, however, were so far quite opposed to a prohibitive policy. But it should not be left to a private member to carry out such legislation. He would vote for the Bill, desiring to promote any measure tending to discourage an unlimited traffic in liquors. He believed, however, the Bill was not intended to be proceeded with during this session.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL had only been prevented from speaking sooner by the haste with which the two previous speakers had risen to address the House. No doubt honourable members were aware of the difficulty of dealing with a Bill of this description that a responsible Government must feel. Every one knew the intense earnestness of the mover of the Bill on this question. All would rejoice if it were possible to find some means of carrying out the object of his measure. No one could dispute the enormous moral and physical evils produced by intemperance. Attention early in the session had been called to the subject, owing to the numerous petitions that had been presented. A committee, too, had been appointed, and he hoped its labours would be useful. He (the Attorney-General) had considered whether it was competent for this House to deal with the question, and he had, although most reluctantly, come to the conclusion he was about to state. He was