

responsible to his constituency he believed that the legislation proposed by Mr. Marter was clearly within the powers of the legislature, and as it was favored by a large majority of the people of the country he declared his adherence to the bill. (Applause.) He had been somewhat struck by the two lines of argument which had been advanced by hon. gentlemen opposite in dealing with this measure, and he was somewhat amused to hear the minister of education and Mr. Guthrie make the declarations practically of the same character which proceeded from their lips yesterday. Mr. Ross had declared that the bill, while purposing to abolish the retail liquor traffic, would drive that traffic into the homes of the people. Mr. Guthrie had said that from the legal aspect it was inconsistent. The minister of education was a member of the government which had introduced into the legislature a measure proceeding precisely upon the same lines as Mr. Marter's bill. He referred to the local option bill. The provincial secretary in introducing that bill had declared it to be one of the most important that he had ever had charge of in the legislature, and yet, though the government had claimed credit for that legislation, the minister of education had got up in his place and denounced it as an injury to the temperance cause. He was not there to attack the record of Mr. Ross in his private capacity as a temperance man, but it was his duty to call the attention of the house to the political record of Mr. Ross as a temperance reformer. Sixteen years ago a question analogous to that which was being debated in the house and the country now was presented for the consideration of the house of commons of Canada. In 1877 Mr. Schultz had proposed to the house a resolution declaring that a prohibitory liquor law was the only effective remedy for the evil of intemperance, and it was the duty of the government to submit such a measure at the earliest moment practicable. Practically that was what was proposed by Mr. Marter. The position in the house of commons was analogous to the position in the legislature to-day. Mr. Ross was the gentleman who on that occasion was put forward by the government of that day to meet that resolution. It was a case of history practically repeating itself. Mr. Ross had moved an amendment declaring that whereas grave doubts existed whether, under the provisions of the British North America act, the house had the power to say that intoxicating liquor was a beverage; and whereas the house would not recede from any declaration on the matter of a prohibitory liquor law, it was not expedient under the present circumstances to express any opinion regarding the action to be taken by the government on the question. He told the people in 1877 that grave doubts existed, and he was telling the people to-day, respecting the jurisdiction of the legislature, that there was a case about to be settled in the court of appeal to determine this question; and he told the people that in view of these circumstances it was inexpedient that any legislation should be adopted. He was playing again the game he played in 1877. He produced a witness to sustain his position, and in this there was another parallel. He cited as a witness the attorney-general of Ontario. In order to satisfy the house that no unreasonable delay would result by not putting this legislation on the paper at that session—this was fifteen years ago—he stated that he had placed himself in communication with the attorney-general, who had charge of a case on behalf of the government of Ontario. By this correspondence he ascertained that it was the intention to open up the whole question of the jurisdiction of the provincial legislature, and learn whether the Dominion parliament or the local legislature had the control over the prohibition of the sale and manufacture of intoxicating liquor. So that seventeen years ago the hon. gentleman, who stood in an analogous position to that occupied by Mr. Marter, had precisely the same witnesses cited for the purpose of inducing a majority of the house to vote the motion down; and fifteen years had passed without any steps being taken to solve this important question. Was it not fair to ask what reliance could be reposed in the promises of Mr. Ross' amendment? He was somewhat astonished at the course of the attorney-general in this matter, and while not wishing to impute motives unworthy of a gentleman occupying the position he did, yet he had a right to call attention to the fact that, while on all provincial questions he was armed to the teeth and ready to fight to the

last ditch in defence of provincial rights how was it that when this question came up they found him running away? Mr. Whitney had spoken of the votes of liquor dealers being bound to the government by an iron chain. They were bound to it by a golden chain. The credit of the improvement that had taken place in this country in respect to the drinking of intoxicating liquors and the arising of from the use and abuse of intoxicating liquors, hon. gentlemen opposite claimed for the administration if only they were supporters. They seemed to think that the efforts of the Reformers who had been working in support of the temperance principles had counted for nothing and that all the improvement was due to the government and the way they had carried out their act. He entirely dissented from the proposition that the liquor license system had been honestly and fairly carried out in the interest of temperance and in the interest of the country. He charged against hon. gentlemen opposite that they had used the temperance people and the temperance question as a means by which they had maintained themselves in power. They attempted to hold the temperance people and the liquor men at the same time to support them in office. A sworn statement was made by a wholesale liquor dealer that he had advised the liquor sellers of Hamilton to support the Mowat government because it was in the interest of the liquor traffic that the Mowat government should not be defeated. How could that be if the government was administering the license law as it should be? It was an open secret that the government had collected from liquor dealers thousands of dollars, and he did not wonder that some hon. gentlemen who saw the danger of the source of their supplies being taken away from them should fight to the last in resisting any interference with the license system.

Mr. Meredith then produced an affidavit made by John Cuthbert, the Toronto ex-hotelkeeper, charging that he had been compelled to pay \$100 to the Reform party of the province.

Mr. Fraser—The same old story.

Mr. Meredith—No, it is the same true story. (Laughter and applause.)

He then produced the marked checks made by Mr. Cuthbert, which have already figured in print. It was all very well for hon. gentlemen opposite to say that that was nothing—that it was merely an election subscription—but he would ask the house if it was not an indecent thing for the men who were in office, controlling the business of the province, to send their emissaries round to bleed hotelkeepers for the cause of the party. How could the government in the light of such events carry out efficiently the liquor regulations, or pose as the friends of the temperance cause? Mr. Meredith then read a letter from Mr. J. J. Lundy of Peterboro', urging a tenant to vote right as it was in his own interests. If the law was administered honestly by the Ontario government they would not be influenced by how a man voted, and hotelkeepers or government contractors would not feel that they were compelled to vote straight in order to continue in business. The license system, he repeated, was a huge machine by means of which the hon. gentlemen opposite were holding themselves in place and power in this country. In The Globe newspaper, which he read every day—(cries of "Hear, hear")—he noticed that a clergyman writing to the paper on the vote they were taking on the prohibition question said that he was against the Marter bill because the attorney-general had said there were constitutional doubts, and that when these were decided he would support a proposition for provincial prohibition. Now, he would call to the attention of the house that the attorney-general had not promised to give prohibition if it were found to be within their jurisdiction. All that

the hon. gentlemen opposite had committed themselves to was that they "would consider and decide then as expedient." And yet temperance men like the member for North York expressed satisfaction with this and thought the government was very magnanimous. He would venture to predict that the temperance people of the province would not be satisfied with such a doubtful attitude.

Taking up the question of the power of the provinces to regulate the traffic, Mr. Meredith pointed out that no one called in question the right of the province to cut off shop licenses if they choose. If then there was the right to abolish snog licenses, there was no reason in common sense, or common law, which was founded on common sense, why they should not have the right to say you shall not sell by retail or in small quantities. He quoted the case of Orillia v. Slavin, in which judgment was given upholding the right to prohibit the sale of liquor in