

Government has consequently come to the conclusion that to submit only the question set forth in the present act would not be fair and would not give public opinion "an opportunity of expressing itself in the ballot box as freely and untrammelled as possible,"—as promised by me when the bill became law—would not permit, what I believe every honest man and woman, prohibitionist and anti-prohibitionist alike desires, a full and fair expression of what the wishes of the people of the Province are in the matter.

#### One Question Insufficient.

To submit the one question set forth in the present act would settle nothing—would not, in my opinion, be in the best interests of temperance—because after a vote on that question we would know little more about what the real sentiment of the people is on the subject than we do to-day. We would simply have to take another vote that would enable people to say by their ballots what they really believe is the best method of dealing with this vexed question.

The question or questions submitted should be in such form as to enable the Government and the Legislature to determine what public opinion is on the subject. We all admit a prohibitory law cannot be effectively enforced unless it has public opinion behind it.

It is public opinion freely and fairly expressed that is of importance; not a big majority on a question that does not enable the people to give free expression to their views.

Many good and conscientious citizens, as good and conscientious as we have in the Province, do not approve of the act as it stands to-day, but are absolutely opposed to a return to the old license system. If you submitted the question set forth in the act, these people would either be compelled to refrain from voting or else compelled to vote for an act that they did not approve of in its entirety. Under these conditions a full verdict of the people could not be obtained. The bill will therefore provide for the submission of the question specifically set forth in the act and for such other questions as will enable the electors to say what, in their opinion, is the best method of dealing with this question.

The people having had a full and fair opportunity of giving expression to their will, the Government will fairly and fearlessly carry out the will of the people so expressed. And the people of this Province, than which there are no more moral or law-abiding people in the world, will, I feel sure, abide by the will of the majority, and prohibitionist and anti-prohibitionist alike will loyally abide by whatever law may be approved of by the majority.

#### Three Schools of Thought.

So far as I am able to ascertain public opinion, there are three principal schools of thought or bodies of public opinion on this subject:

(1) Those who desire the continuance of the present Ontario Temperance Act, without any amendments other than those that may help to improve its restrictive provisions and aid in its enforcement.

(2) Those who favor the sale of light beer as a beverage, but do not favor the sale of strong liquors.

(3) Those who desire the opportunity of purchasing liquors of all kinds for consumption in their own homes.

Then those coming in the second class, viz., those desiring the sale of light beer, are subdivided into two classes:

(1) Those who are opposed to the bar, and to the sale of anything that may be classes in any way as intoxicating, in public places, and only desire the sale of light beer for home consumption.

(2) Those who desire, in addition to the right to purchase light beer for home consumption, the privilege of buying it by the glass.

In this class are to be found particularly the workingman, who wants the opportunity of buying by the glass a light beer, but beer containing more than 2½ per cent. proof spirits; the unmarried man who lives in a boarding-house and has no facilities for keeping beer in

his room; the man who does not want beer in his home, but wants a drink of beer on his way home from work.

I have my own opinion as to the weight of public opinion behind these different propositions, but no one can do more than hazard a guess on the subject. The Government has, therefore, framed a ballot designed to fairly test public opinion, and give every man and every woman an opportunity of expressing their real convictions in the matter. There may be some slight verbal changes, but the ballot we have determined to adopt is as follows:

#### The Form of Ballot.

(1) Are you in favor of the repeal of the Ontario Temperance Act?

(2) Are you in favor of the sale of light beer containing not more than 2 51-100 per cent. alcohol weight measure through Government agencies, and amendments to the Ontario Temperance Act to permit such sale?

(3) Are you in favor of the sale of light beer containing not more than 2 51-100 per cent. alcohol weight measure in standard hotels in local municipalities that by majority vote favor such sale, and amendments to the Ontario Temperance Act to permit such sale?

(4) Are you in favor of the sale of spirituous and malt liquors through Government agencies, and amendments to the Ontario Temperance Act to permit such sale?

Honorable gentlemen will note every question is separate and distinct. There is no confusion of one question with the other. The issue involved in each question is clearly defined, so that the most unlearned can easily understand the effect of the vote he gives. The wayfaring man need not err.

In order that the voter may have clearly before his mind the effect of what he is doing, the strength of beer that may be sold, in case he answers to questions 2 and 3 in the affirmative, is set forth in the questions.

#### Vote on Every Question.

In order to prevent any confusion in determining the result, every voter must vote on every question, or his ballot will be spoiled. The act will be so drawn as to give effect to whatever the will of the people may be as disclosed by the vote on each question.

Thus, if the first question is answered in the affirmative, the Ontario Temperance Act will be repealed and the old license law just as it existed prior to 1916, will be revived. In that event there would be no necessity for further consideration of the other questions, for the greater would include the less, and liquor would be sold in bars and shops as in years gone by. But this is not likely to happen.

If question two is answered in the negative, nothing is required to be done, but if it is answered in the affirmative, the Government will be called upon to at once make provision for the sale of light beer through Government sales agencies—provisions for the establishment of which is made by the bill I referred to in my opening remarks.

The same course will follow in regard to question three. If the majority vote is in the negative, no action is necessary. If the majority vote is in the affirmative, the Government will be called upon to at once make provision for sale of light beer in standard hotels. This question differs from the other questions in this: that before the Government can authorize the issue of a license to sell beer in a standard hotel, in any municipality, two things must happen: (1) a majority of all the electors in the Province voting must have voted in the affirmative on this question; (2) a majority of the electors voting in the municipality must also have voted in the affirmative. Take the city of Toronto, a license could not be granted in this city to sell light beer unless a majority of those voting in the whole Province had voted "yes" to question three, and a majority of the electors of Toronto had also voted "yes" to this question. If questions two and three