SCOTT ACT.

ADDRESS

BY

Prof. Geo. E. Foster,

Of the University of New Brunswick,

IN FAVOR OF THE ACT,

IN

Gospel Temperance Tent,

HAMILTON, JULY 19th, 1880.
SCOTT ACT SPEECH,

DELIVERED BY

PROF. GEO. E. FOSTER

In favor of the Act, at the Gospel Temperance Tent, July 19th, 1880.

A DISCUSSION WANTED.

Professor Foster, who was warmly received, said—Of course, then, we are to have no discussion other than what I myself may undertake and carry on. To-morrow night, if there be no provision made for discussion, we will have a discussion anyway. We had a discussion yesterday when I took the Spec’s objections to the Scott Act, and tried to answer them, and so to-morrow night if no person comes forward. I shall take Mr. Dodds’ objections up and try to answer them. (Applause). To-night, my friends, I shall have again to deal, as I have dealt on previous occasions, mainly with principles rather than with details. The succeeding evenings shall be devoted more generally to dealing with the objections urged against the Scott Act, and with reference to the alleged failure of prohibition when tried by experience. There is no attribute of human nature before which we may stand with so much reverence as that attribute which views a great undertaking—a great responsibility—before it, and sits down earnestly and calmly to prepare itself, by meditation and sound thinking, for the time when, as a responsible human being, that undertaking, that enterprise, shall be carried out. The mother who sits down in front of her young children to consider the responsibility which lies upon her, who, thinking of the care and attention which she must devote to them, searches about her for principles to instil into their youthful minds, and methods of government which may be useful in their correct upbringing, challenges the respect and esteem of every sensible person. And so the people who have placed before them a great public undertaking—an enterprise which concerns the best interests of society, both now and for all time—who sit hour after hour, and night after night, listening to a discussion of the principles which underlie the action they ought to take, in order that they may be able to do their whole duty—the attitude of such a people, I say, ought to bring reverence into the mind of every person who beholds it. (Hear, hear.) As in other SCOTT ACT CAMPAIGNS in which I have taken part, there is nothing which has so taken hold upon me since I came to Hamilton as the thoughtful earnestness of the people to whom I have been talking. And when a man is in this listening, truth-seeking attitude there can be nothing better for discussion than sound, well-established principles. We may talk about the details and debate about the incidents of these great questions, but the main thing is to get the principles into the mind and heart of the hearer. If these are firmly impressed on the thought of the hearer, he can have no great difficulty in making up his mind as to the course he should pursue. To-night, therefore, I shall speak on some principles—great principles—with reference to

THIS ENORMOUS DRINK TRAFFIC,
and how it ought to be dealt with by the people. If there is one thing that challenges our attention more than another it is to witness the development of the physical, vegetable and animal life around us. The farmer does not get all the compensation for his labor out of the produce of the soil—the good things—which come to his hands, he gains much greater compensation from the interest which he takes in that which he is growing. So with the builder! Watch him as he applies the mortar; see him as he puts the capstones in their proper places, and steps back to get a better view of the progress of his
work. He sees it growing in proportions, in stability, and in beauty before him, but he is not merely happy when it is finished, because he receives value for his services, but he derives the most intense satisfaction from the fact that he was the builder, that he has finished a building which rears itself in magnificence before him—the creation of his own brain, the result of his own energy. (Applause.) If this be true with regard to man's feelings about inanimate things, it is still more true in reference to animate things, but particularly with regard to those about us. The interest of a school teacher in his school does not merely proceed from the fact that he is there merely to give a pupil instruction, but from the sense that the intellect which has been given to him

almost a blank tablet

is growing into a strong, reasoning power, and so unfolding into young manhood, into young womanhood. In national life, in civic life, the interest is still greater. You have the complex influences, the many things moving towards certain influences and results; and watching these and getting a right conception of civic gradations or national results, we receive still more valuable instruction. We see what makes man the national author or the statesman, and so, my friends, with those nations which have gone before us. We watch how nation after nation has emerged from

a state of barbarism,

and has called literature, science and art to its aid, spreading at last into the beautiful and complete growth of national civilization and greatness. Greece, Rome and the other great nations of ages gone past attained to national splendor, but they have passed away. The Anglo-Saxon race—

that people which came out of the morasses and high mountain fastnesses in Germany, which were nurtured through hardships, have taken their place, and the offshoots of the parent stem bid fair to far exceed it in progress and influence. Yet other nations, great and progressive, have passed away. Their great cities are no longer peoples, dust lies upon their ruins. They are no longer powers in the world. And looking at these things, we are compelled to ask this sad question, Will the Anglo-Saxon nation, which has spread itself over the whole earth, by and by take upon itself the garments of decrepitude and decay and be laid alongside those nations which have passed away? As we ask that question, there comes in every Canadian heart, in every heart in Great Britain, in every heart in the United States, the answer, No, no! (Applause.) The Anglo-Saxon race has within itself that recuperating power which shall

keep it from death

and make it a splendid power and the leader of nations while nations shall endure. With reference to the physical, vegetable and animal life, there are certain conditions which must be complied with, and if not, there cannot be expected proper results. And so there are certain conditions in humanity, and if these are not complied with there will not be proper results. It cannot be questioned that national progress and development is laid down upon certain fixed conditions, and if these are violated national permanence cannot be expected; but if they are acted up to then we may hope for continual life and a continual road to progress. My duty is, therefore, to come down to principles that affect the life of the people of a nation, of a city. I don't want to philosophise too much about this subject, because we generally find that when people become too philosophic they begin by muddling their lives and end by muddling everybody else. (Laughter.) The best plan is to get to the simplest principles as speedily as possible. What are the essential principles that underlie civic or national prosperity? I will answer that question, as is sometimes done, by asking another. What ought the essential characteristics or elements of the best citizen to be? Or taking the city of Hamilton, who is the best citizen you have? Don't one of you get up and name some man, because some one else may wish to name another. The best citizen of Hamilton will possess a character for being most industrious. 'Nature,' it has been said,

'abhors a vacuum,'

but whether that saying be true or not every well constituted citizen abhors a lazy man. (Applause.) We don't believe the world owes any such one a living, and we think if he cannot make a living for himself he should lie down by the wayside and let the people who are working their way on in the world pass him by. But that is not sufficient and I will give you an illustration. I take my spade and go out digging holes in the ground. I dig them down two or three feet deep and two or three feet square. Oh, how I do sweat and how tired I get! How hearty I eat and what sweet sleep I have when I go to bed! Next day I busy myself filling up the holes I had dug. Who dares say I have been idle? Who dares say I have not worked hard? On the following day I go out and dig the earth out of the holes again, and so on day after day. You say that is very foolish. Very well, my industry has not been turned to proper account because I was ignorant. Skilled labor is the need of the world. It is intelligent industry that will tell and what the world wants, and the possession of this is
one of the best characteristics of a good citizen. You may have the most industrious man in Hamilton, and yet not have all the elements of a good citizen. Let us suppose the devil to be present to-night, if any one asked us why he was such an enemy to us, we would say, because of his untiring industry, because of his sharp ways and means, being able to make men believe that white is black, and black white, by pulling the wool over the eyes of men. That is what constitutes the power of the devil. So, in addition to industry and intelligence, we need honest principle, and when we have put these together we have got the best citizen. (Applause.) Man must be industrious and intelligent, but he must be moved by the best principles, and with all these combined you have the citizen which takes the front rank. And so in relation to a nation. All we have to do is to make all citizens of a country of that class and we have the elements of national greatness so far as it is possible for us to get them. (Applause.) We must have industry, intelligence and moral principles. If these be the rules, the city, the state, will stand. If violated or degraded,

THE CITY OR STATE GOES DOWN.

Take the great Persian, Syrian, Grecian and Roman nations, and ask if they came up to these requirements. Let us see why, as a nation, Greece fell. There was no nation more industrious than Greece; her people were as keen as the modern Frenchman. There is no such intelligence in any nation or city to-day as there was in Greece two thousand years ago. What modern city can show the intelligence that the city of Athens did? The great painters of that city produced works of art unequalled; the sculptors defied competition. Her statesmen were men of keen ideas with reference to government. But the people had not a strong moral power; in that lay their great failure. They were sensual. They worshipped that which ministered to the senses. They forgot the strong moral power which is the backbone of any man, of any nation which has it, and upon that rock they were shivered to pieces, whilst their country was left to the Turk, to the Saracen, to the barbarian. (Applause.) And so will it be with any nation which neglects the true principles of government. You see where we are going. I am going to take these three great essentials to civic or national greatness and I am going to test the liquor traffic with them. There are over 550,000 men engaged in this trade in the United States, all endeavoring to carry it on under the sanction of the law; there is the less army in Canada, and there are many thousands more in Great Britain carrying on the enormous traffic. This army of

MORE THAN A MILLION MEN

engaged in this giant liquor traffic have an immense capital to carry it on. What is the trade with reference to these three great requisites of good citizenship? What is the aspect of the liquor traffic towards labor or industry, that first great essential? It is the sworn, and constant, and inveterate enemy of all honest labor and every honest trade (applause), and if I don't prove it then send me home. Put a tavern down anywhere where it has not been before. What is the first result? You see around that tavern two or three men who yesterday were at work at their business, who are now no longer at work. A certain amount of time is wasted in idleness and dissipation about that saloon which yesterday was spent in labor. Let the tavern remain in that place, and gather in its associates, and in proportion as it remains, longer or shorter, it will cause ruin to honest labor and honest laborers. Is it not true? Can any one deny the truth of the assertion? (Voices—No, no, and applause.) Worse than that results, however. In order to make you understand its true relationship to the workingman, let us see how it operates with reference to the other principles laid down as affecting labor. It has been laid down as a fixed principle by a great man that the legitimate labor is one which expends itself upon objects which stimulates to further effort or makes instruments for further production. Any labor which destroys the genius of the people, which blunts their energies and lowers their capacity to think correctly, or to use their inventive power, causes this production

TO BE DEBASED OR DEGRADED,

and the course is downward. Show me a single energy which comes from the bottle which is given to the people by the dram-sellers of this country, among you hundreds of energies which are blasted, and thousands of capacities which are degraded and debased, and wrecked amidst the ruin which has been wrought by this traffic. (Applause.) It is calculated that Great Britain loses every year one million out of every six millions of her mechanical and commercial power because of the drink traffic. Or, to put it in other words, of the laborers of Great Britain one-sixth of the power is lost because of the influences of this drink traffic. It is the worst foe of labor. It destroys and palls the arm of the honest laborer; it debauches his capacity for invention, and leaves its paralysis to be universally felt. It is the leech of all honest trades. I have often been surprised that honest and shrewd business men have not seen that the liquor traffic is their worst enemy. I cannot see why such should not come out unitedly against it. I will give you a single instance.
that in Hamilton there are 200 working-men. Each receives $400 a year for his services to keep his wife and little family, and it takes exactly $300 a year to provide the very necessities of the family. Each one of these 200 is a drinking man and patronises the 139 saloons of Hamilton, and it is found out at the end of the year that each has spent $100 in some one or other of the 139. But there comes along

A TEMPERANCE REFORMATION.

My friend Mr. Chisholm and others get to work, and in the course of the year these 200 are all sober and a better reformation ensues, which goes down and closes up all the dram shops of the city. (Applause.) What happens? Last year it took exactly $500 for the bare necessities of each man's family, what becomes of it this year? He does not put it in the bank for some man who has spent thirty years making a pious reputation to run off with between night and morning. Oh, no! Is it put out in Northern Pacific stock purchased at 240 and found to be worth nothing? Not it. The man says 'My wife is not as decently dressed as she ought to be, I must get her a new dress. My children don't have so good clothes as they might, and they must have more of them.' And so a portion of the money formerly spent in the saloon is spent in the dry goods stores. He says, 'We must have better food than we had last year; we must have a piece of beefsteak, and now and again we will have a pair of chickens.' And a portion goes to the butcher, and another to the grocery. Again he says, 'My front room is very shabby,' and he goes down town to the furniture dealer, and gets new chairs and other fixings. He buys half a dozen good forks and knives to be used on Sundays and other festal occasions, and he spends money in various useful ways. So in the course of the year $100 has been distributed by him. And what is the result? It has gone to the legitimate business of the city of Hamilton. You have got it. You, the butcher, the grocer, the furniture dealer, the mechanics of Hamilton (from whom these men don't wish to take their beer) have got it. (Applause.) The $100 spent by 200 men amounts to $20,000 a year; and this large sum has poured into the legitimate interests of the country, while last year it went into the till of the rum-seller. It is, I say, passing strange that honest, level-headed business men don't see this

LEECH UPON THEIR TRADE,

and don't rise up in arms against it, as an outrage upon honest business. Suppose we live in a little village and suppose a wheelwright comes and sets up shop in it. All the people are glad to see him come. They know that somebody has got to prepare the timber for his work. Somebody has got to iron his wheels and then the blacksmith comes. Somebody has got to paint and finish the carriage after it is built, and so it goes on. In proportion as the industries increase so will the workmen. But suppose a dram shop comes to the village. These other businesses help each other. With the dram shop it is different. The painter is taken away, and the carriage builder feels he is not so capable of work. The blacksmith, too, is taken from his work, and it has interfered with each branch of business. There is a disarrangement in business generally, and in proportion to that the dram-shop prospers. Is not this argument sound in reason? (A voice: 'It is,' and applause.) Last year I was

OUT IN NEBRASKA.

I was down at the little town of Plattemouth, where there was an extensive railway contract being carried out. The contractors had over 1,000 men at work there. There were many dram-shops in the town, and the men spent a great deal of their time there. But the boss came along and said to the authorities of the town: 'You have got to close your dram shops at night, or I will take my men over to the other side of the river and build huts for them there. Liquor-selling interferes with my business, and I can't carry it on here if the saloons are not shut up.' (Applause.) And that is the verdict of every man who carries on a business in a place where there are dram shops. The traffic interferes most seriously with all legitimate business. But it does more. It destroys the motive for business. If the devil and all his angels—don't let the Spectator be horrified because I have said this (laughter)—if the devil and all his angels had sat down for a century to devise some means of special usefulness to damn and destroy mankind, they could not have hit upon a better thing than the legalized liquor traffic. Being legalized, the traffic has all the majesty of the law thrown around it. The law says don't touch it, and throws its arms around the traffic. The Churches, too, invest the trade with respectability, and are often on the side of the legalized dram shop, because in many of the churches there are deacons, and wardens, and even ministers, who go to prayers for a few hours on Sunday, and pray God to bless their efforts, while they make unhallowed gains in one way or another, during the week. Thus

THE LEVER OF THE CHURCH

is afforded to the traffic. And with the respectability of the Church, and the majesty of the law behind it, the traffic gets a protection and a power for development of the most enormous character. (Applause.) The traffic destroys the motive power of labor; and when you take that
motive power of labor out of the breast of a man you leave him a poor miserable creature upon the highways of the world. Why do you work? Why do I work? It is because we have some motive which draws or impels us on. We have an object in life and we work on in order to attain that object. You want to build yourself a home, that you may have a place in which to spend in quietness your later years. Therefore you work. This motive power is strong in the human heart and it is the great impelling power to labor. Take a man engaged in a course of dissipation and in proportion as his motive dies out will be the depth to which he will sink. He cares for nothing but to eat and drink, especially to drink, and he is almost continually to be found in a drunken stupor. When you or I meet with such a man, what is our first endeavor? Is it not to try and get some spark of self-respect into him—to get his motive power revived? If we can do that, we may yet do something towards his rescue. But he must have an incentive to work and to

A BETTER LIFE.
The dram shop is the enemy of labor because, by the miserable dissipations which it invariably causes, it slays all motive.
(Appause.) I think I have said enough to prove that the dram shop is an enemy to labor and trade, and so is an enemy to civic or national greatness or permanence. What is the aspect of this liquor traffic with reference to the second constituent in civic or national greatness—that is, intelligence? Does the dram shop promote intelligence among the people? If it does, throw your arms around it. Put the majesty of the law against it. Don't let it be harmed. But if the truth is always the enemy of intelligence pull it out, tear it down. Where is the consistency in building up an educational system and then putting the protection of law around a giant who will tear it down?

IT PRODUCES IGNORANCE.
In the United States—and I take the States because we have as yet unfortunately not got accurate statistics on the subject in Canada—there are 12,000,000 children of school age who ought all to be at school. About 8,000,000 actually attend the schools. Probably 1,000,000 of the remainder are not at school because they have to work, or are too far from school. But it is calculated, and is not denied, that 3,000,000 children in the United States are not in the schools of the country because of the drunkenness of their parents or their guardians. If the future is to be made out of the present, if the citizen is to be made out of the child, and if the child becomes a good citizen in proportion to his mental, moral and industrial development, what must be the outlook of the country which every year sends out 3,000,000 of her children without education, and debits them all to the great mother—drink. What does it mean? It would not mean so much in Russia, where the people do not rule. But it means everything under such republican forms of government as exist in Canada and the United States. The government in these lands rests upon the people, and the liquor traffic by this means breaks up the power and intelligence of the people. It turns out every year 3,000,000 citizens, each male of whom shall go forth and have as good a vote in the conduct of the affairs of the state as the president of a college, as the honest farmer, as the well educated man; and each one of whom shall have a voice as to who shall rule the country and as to what shall be the tendency of the government. It is a terrible thing to see the drink business turning out these people uneducated. Did I say they are uneducated? They are educated; but their education tends downwards. Did these three women who were found drunk, fighting on your streets the other day, have families? If so, ask yourselves, What must be their children? Who made the drunken mothers? The rum shops. The influence of such mothers must be vicious, degrading. If the mother is drunken and brawling, we cannot think of the child as receiving any other education but that which is vicious, which tends downwards and which sends out the youth into debauched man and womanhood, ready to be made criminals. (Applause.)

THE DRAM SHOP IS AN EDUCATOR.
The best part of the education of a country, of a people, is not what is got at our schools or colleges. It is the education we get by mingling with each other, and exchanging ideas in every day life. I learned principles in school and in college, but I didn't begin to get my education till I mingled with the people in the world, and received opportunities to apply these principles. There are 250,000 dram shops in the United States of America. Do they have an average of ten visitors in one day? That is a small number for each. But it makes 2,500,000 persons who every day go into the dram shops of the States. What do you learn there? High mental endeavor and motive? Not a bit of it. The education is all downward. It is the same in Canada. And I shudder to think that in the 12,000 dram shops we have in this country, there are 120,000 persons going through a course of degradation which is productive of the worst possible evils. Am I not right in saying the saloon is the enemy of the intelligence of the country? Put the dram shop alongside the school
house. Does it aid education? Say what school or college there is which has not developed a genius, and graduated him in those principles which are right and true? But how many of such have succumbed to the influences of the dram shop, and have been dragged down by its terrible degradation? Why should we educate such geniuses and skilled artists, and then hand them over as a prey to the dram shops? If it is right to have schools and colleges, it is wrong to authorize anything which nullifies the influence of these schools and colleges. (Applause.) The liquor traffic is the enemy of the schools of the country, and neutralizes the good which is calculated to spring from them. Turning to the third head of my address, I ask, Does the liquor traffic add to, strengthen and buoy up the moral principles of the people? But if, on the other hand, it adds nothing to the moral influences and stability of the people, then I say, cursed is the dram shop. (Hear, hear and applause.) A man may be moderately industrious, and he may be only moderately intelligent, and yet may be a very good kind of a citizen. He may be an excellent neighbor, provided he is moral and his principles are correct. And so the last thing we can give up in the individual, the last thing we can give up in the nation, are the honest moral principles which so conduces to happiness and prosperity. Young man, of all things, keep your moral purpose—keep your high principles. If you fail in the walks of industry, if you are unsuccessful in intellectual endeavor, you will yet triumph if you have retained your morality and have wrapped your life about with high principles. The last thing a city or a country can afford to do without is its stern. I may say, PURITANIC MORALITY. (Applause.) There is nothing which attacks this moral power of a city or country, which lowers it, weakens it, which is such an enemy of permanence, as the dram shop. The people should girp on the sword of moral purity and smite down that which is opposed to their true welfare. In every case the air of the dram shop is against moral purity. Here is a young man who goes out of one of our Christian homes. He has been well brought up, and the safest and best guard which he has got is his sense of personal purity. Parents, don't be so anxious to give your boy money: in nine cases out of ten it will be used to get means of questionable enjoyment. Don't be so anxious to give him a high position in life or to secure for him an advanced place in his trade. But above all be anxious that when your boy passes out from your influence he shall carry in his breast that principle of moral purity against which vice may throw itself, but which it cannot attach itself to. Oh! young men, get that within yourselves, and if you have got that and keep it you must succeed. But as the young man comes out from his home with a sense of moral purity, he is met by the temptations of the dram shop. They must blunt that SENSE OF MORAL PURITY before they can make him the victim of their wiles. The boy goes with a companion who is used to those places, and association of this sort soon puts a little blunt upon his moral purity. He goes into those respectful places—those gilded palaces—first, and there his purity becomes a little more blunted. He next goes into another place, a little bit less respectable. He learns jests which he has never heard before, and which he would be ashamed to repeat. He hears that coarse badinage about women which never caught his ear in the home circle, and which he would be ashamed to acknowledge to his mother or his sister that he had listened to. He recoiled from it at first; but in a little while after you will find him with the same jest on his own lips. A little step further forward, and he is ready for any depth of degradation that continued temptations may lead him into. That is the experimental course that the dram shop takes with reference to the youth of the country. I see a young boy standing within the dram shop, and listening to the jests there being uttered; it is only a question of time, and he will not feel the pricking of conscience that at first tells him he is doing wrong. A dram shop's whole tendency is to bring a man lower and lower down in his moral standing. Unlike nature, whose influence is ever of an elevating character, the dram shop always drags down. (Applause.) In the city of Chicago, on one night in October, 1878, six saloons were watched by a committee of citizens. Into these six saloons in that one evening 12,015 persons entered, at least 1,000 of whom were women and girls. A large proportion of the males were boys from 14 to 21 years of age. The police said there was not a woman or girl who entered these places who had any character to lose. Put 12,000 of such persons into these six places with low singing, low music and all the degrading influences which they carry with them and what must be the terrible results of the existence of such places? A proprietor of one of these places had to hire six special constables to keep the abandoned people from tearing one another to pieces; and in one of the saloons a ring was actually formed, and half a dozen drunken women engaged in a fight, to which they were urged on by their abandoned companions. These are the elevating influences, these are the results
which come from the dram-shop. You would not do that, would you? Go, get the drunkards’ influences to surround you, and it is morally certain that within a limited number of years you will have become just as bad as they are. (Applause.) The liquor traffic eats out the morality of the people, and brings them nothing but degradation, and so is the enemy of the national and civic progress. You, the people of Hamilton, are asked to vote, in October or November next, as to whether you will longer license this traffic. This is a personal matter. You can no longer shift it on to the Council, or the Government, or the Commissioners. It is you who will give life to this traffic for three years, or condemn it for three years. If you call it into life, what do you do? You say, ‘Industry is an essential element of prosperity in life, yet I call into existence an enginery which will be at work for three years to

DISTURB AND DESTROY

that industry, which I say must be protected.’ You say, ‘I believe that intelligence is one of the essentials of civic and national welfare, and yet I am to vote to bring into life an enginery which for three years will militate against progress in intelligence.’ You say, ‘I believe in moral purity, in supporting the Church, in standing by the school, and yet I am to vote to bring into the city an enginery which levels all its powers against moral purity, against the Church, against the school, day after day, night after night, week after week, year after year.’ Can you take such a stand as that and license this drink traffic? (Voices, ‘No, no.’) Before God and my conscience, I cannot do it. We have been told the act can’t be worked. Dare you take the responsibility to vote against it, because of that allegation? God forbid! I say I don’t care whether it works or not. Licensing such a gigantic evil is simply monstrous and immoral. Let God take care of the future. As for me and you, let us not license this enormous evil which tends to so much ruin. I make this challenge to-night for any person to dispute. There never has been an instance in history where prohibition has been tried, and has had a fair chance, where it has not promoted the industry, the intelligence, the morality, the purity of the people. (Applause.) And I am willing to let that challenge go world-wide, and I defy any one to dispute it. (Loud applause.) You may take instances of prohibition put upon a city, under no kind of regulation, and therefore upset by them. You may find the law not working in cities where sheriffs and constables and other officers owe their positions to the very people who are opposed to prohibition and who are doing all they can to make it a failure. I say you may find places like that where prohibition has not been successful, but that is not prohibition. It is the name without the substance; it is the shadow only and not the reality. But go where the conditions are fair, where its provisions are respected and it is a success, and it has done for the people that which we submit it will do for the city of Hamilton. (Applause.) I think I have spoken long enough to-night. (Cries of ‘Go on!’) I wish to keep my word with you that I would not tire you, but if you come to-morrow night we will have that discussion. (Loud applause.)