

The Camp Fire.

A MONTHLY JOURNAL
OF TEMPERANCE PROGRESS.

SPECIALLY DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF
THE PROHIBITION CAUSE.

Edited by F. S. SPENCE

ADDRESS - TORONTO, ON.

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NOTE.—It is proposed to make "THE CAMP FIRE" the cheapest temperance paper in the world, taking into consideration its size, the matter it contains and the price at which it is published.

Every friend of temperance is earnestly requested to assist in this effort by subscribing and by sending in facts or arguments that might be of interest or use to our workers. The editor will be thankful for correspondence upon any topic connected with the temperance reform. Our limited space will compel condensation. No letter for publication should contain more than two hundred words—if shorter, still better.

TORONTO, MAY, 1895.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT.

The Vanguard for 1893-4, in neat cloth binding, is now for sale. It is the most important Canadian contribution yet made to the literature of the temperance and prohibition reform, containing over 650 pages full of invaluable arguments, facts and statistics, all reliable, fresh and good, fully and carefully indexed. No worker can afford to be without it. The price is only ONE DOLLAR. The number of copies is limited. Send your order at once to the Editor,

F. S. SPENCE,

51 Confederation Life Building.

PARLIAMENTARY ACTION.

The annual meeting of the Legislation Committee of the Council of the Dominion Alliance was held in Room 50 of the Parliament Buildings at Ottawa, on Wednesday 8th inst.

There was present an unusually large number of Members of Parliament, over fifty being in attendance. The interest taken in the matters discussed, was lively and encouraging.

By a large vote, only three members dissenting, this important committee decided to push to a vote in parliament, the resolution of which Mr. T. B. Flint has already given notice. It is in the following terms:—

"That, in the opinion of this House, the manufacture, importation and sale of intoxicating liquors in Canada except for sacramental, scientific, manufacturing and medical purposes should be prohibited by law."

As early as practicable Mr. Flint will press this resolution on the attention of the House of Commons. It will no doubt be discussed at length. It is hoped that a division upon it will be taken.

We would suggest to the friends of prohibition in every constituency, the wisdom of writing at once to their representative, urging him to give Mr. Flint's moderate proposal a cordial support. The effect of such communications will be great. A campaign of letter writing to Members of Parliament would be a powerful help to our cause. Let us take advantage of the opportunity.

ORGANIZATION.

It is manifest that whether or not temperance workers are alive to the present position of our reform, the liquor traffic is keenly alive to it.

Probably never before were the license holders of Ontario as well organized as they are at present. They have their societies, their officers, their legal advisers, they are prepared for the contest that they know is coming.

This means that the workers for prohibition have to face more determined and better equipped opposition than ever before. The coming fight will be no child's play. The liquor business will be fighting for its life. It recognizes the danger ahead. The struggle will be a desperate one.

This thorough and effective organization can only be successfully met by organization equally thorough and effective. The prohibitionists must be prepared for the conflict if they are to hold their own in it. Definite, thorough organization is the duty of the hour.

This organization must be nonsectarian, nondenominational. Societies and churches are doing, and will continue to do, splendid work in inspiring and educating those who will take part in the struggle. They cannot from their nature unite all available forces in the practical political work that has to be done.

Every electoral district must have its Union, League, Alliance, or similar federation of workers. Every locality should have its Prohibition Club or similar organization. In the present "time of peace" we must prepare for the impending war. Thorough organization is the present pressing duty.

LICENSE COMMISSIONERS.

The prohibition electors of Ontario have been recently startled by the extent to which Boards of License Commissioners have, in some localities, shown themselves the warm friends of the liquor traffic, and the out and out opponents of temperance.

At a time when public opinion has been definitely shown to be against the liquor traffic, the Boards of Commissioners appointed by a government professedly favorable to prohibition, have undertaken to override public opinion and enlarge the sphere of the liquor traffic's evil operations.

In London, the license commissioners have extended the time of permitted sale, and so given the liquor traffic further opportunities of working out the mischief in which it is everywhere so successful.

In the City of Toronto, in spite of strong public protests, the commissioners are entertaining a proposition to permit liquor selling on the Island, which for many years has been kept free from the legalized operation of this terrible curse.

At the time of writing this article these Toronto commissioners are waiting the result of an application to the courts to prohibit them from indecently accepting an application that does not comply with all the conditions of the license law, the object of the applicants being liquor selling on the Island as before mentioned.

This Island is Toronto's principal pleasure resort. It is frequented largely by women and children. It has been remarkable for its good order and law observance. It has for many years been free from liquor licenses.

If the Toronto commissioners accede to the proposition that has been made and extend the liquor traffic to this territory from which it has hitherto been excluded, they will declare themselves opponents of what is right, and many persons will consider them as simply the official representatives and friends of the ruin-working liquor traffic.

LOCAL OPTION IN GREAT BRITAIN.

The British Government has taken a firm stand in favor of Local Option legislation. The Chancellor of the Exchequer is insisting upon the question being definitely and immediately dealt with by the House of Commons.

In this action he is loyally sustained by the great mass of the Liberal representatives in the House. The Conservatives, with a few noble exceptions, are of course opposing him bitterly. It is a case in which the temperance people have the full support of one political party, while the liquor traffic's interests are bound up with the other.

All this struggle is over a proposition to give the people of a locality the right to restrict or prohibit the liquor traffic in that locality. It is a very mild measure of local option. It is such legislation as every part of the Dominion of Canada already possesses. It is eminently moderate, reasonable and right.

Whether or not the present Parliament will enact the proposed legislation, its enactment is only a question of time. Public sentiment in favor of it is rapidly increasing. People are realizing its justice. In terror of its success the liquor traffic is fighting it with desperation.

Canadians cordially sympathize with their British friends in the present contest and heartily wish them a God speed in this struggle for a weapon with which to defend their homes.

THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

As everybody expected, the Royal Commission has reported against prohibition. It was a packed jury from the outset. A majority of those selected for it were known and avowed opponents of prohibition. The Commission however, did its work. For four long years it kept the prohibition question out of Parliament. An immense amount of money was expended in the securing of this result. People realize to-day that the whole thing was a stupendous and extravagant farce.

The evidence taken by the Commission fills six bulky volumes. Probably no one will ever read them. The reports and appendices will likely make a couple of volumes more. Even those in whose interests the gigantic humbug was put through, are laughing at its palpable absurdity.

There is a minority report. It is of a totally different character from the report of the majority. The press pronounces it more systematic, thorough and convenient. It manifests earnestness, patience, ability and a comprehensive grasp of what the Commission ought to have been and done. It will be a useful text book for prohibitionists for many years to come.

Now the ridiculous performance is over. Parliament and people have before them the findings of the Commission, which any school-boy could have predicted three years ago when the names of the Commissioners were announced.

The report has been laid before the House of Commons. No intimation has been given by the Dominion Government of what action they propose as its sequel. Four long years we waited for the preparation of the report. How long must we wait for Parliament to digest it, to pronounce upon it, to either endorse or denounce its manifest hostility to the public opinion of the Dominion of Canada.

THE PIC-NIC SEASON.

Some time ago the CAMP FIRE earnestly urged the desirability of making use of the pic-nic season for the propagation of prohibition principles. It was suggested that friends of temperance hold outdoor gatherings for the spread of temperance teaching whenever and wherever possible.

The wisdom of such a course will commend itself to the judgment of all who consider it. By this plan we may get together such audiences as could not be gathered in any other way. Our teachings will reach many who would otherwise be missed. A strengthening of right public sentiment will certainly be the result of such a policy.

We would like to urge the matter still more earnestly. Now is the time for action. Every division, every lodge, every Prohibition Club, should have its pic-nic or outdoor party. Every such gathering should have one or more short, pointed addresses on our political position and duty. This ought to be a summer of education.

POLITICAL ACTION.

The Convention held in Montreal last July was a gathering representative of the different phases of prohibition thought and opinion of the Dominion. It adopted a plan of action involving the following lines of procedure.

1. A thorough organization of the prohibitionists of every locality for united consultation and work. We must pull together if we are to pull with any effect.

2. Judicious effort to secure the nomination by all political parties, of candidates who can be depended upon to stand fearlessly for prohibition, regardless of party predilections.

3. Earnest, united work for the election of such candidates, no matter by what party they may be nominated.

4. The nomination and election of independent candidates where the nomination of sound prohibitionists by existing parties cannot be secured.

The wisdom of this plan is manifest. As a plan however, it will be impotent unless energetically carried out. The Montreal platform will be an utter failure unless prohibitionists take their stand upon it and fearlessly act the principles which it embodies.

RELIGION IN POLITICS.

Religion ought to be carried into politics, but politics ought not to be carried into religion. The former principle makes a man a Christian politician; the latter makes him a political Christian. The former subordinates his politics to his religion; the latter subordinates his religion to his politics. He who follows the former is governed in his political conduct by religious considerations; he who follows the latter is governed in his religious conduct by political considerations. Hence, the latter seeks only to please men. The former aims to do right and to be right; the latter aims to do only what will make him popular.—*Christian Statesmen.*

PART OF THE LABOR QUESTION.

The prohibition question is a part of the labor question. The complaint of the laboring man that he fails to receive a fair share of the wealth he helps to create is undoubtedly true, and when his scanty earnings are diminished by the wastes of intoxicants and tobacco, destitution and wretchedness are certain to overwhelm both himself and family.—*Mary A. Livermore.*