

THE CAMP FIRE.

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Every one who receives this paper is respectfully requested to read every part of it carefully. It is a journal that no Canadian temperance worker can afford to be without. The subscription price is almost insignificant. In the great impending campaign for prohibition in Ontario it will be of intense interest and great value.

QUEBEC ALLIANCE.

Report of Annual Meeting.

The Annual Convention of the Quebec Branch of the Dominion Alliance, was held in the Y.M.C.A. Building, Montreal, on March 1st. A good attendance from different parts of the Province was present. An interesting report was read, showing the Alliance to be in a better condition financially, than it had been for some time, and also giving details of a good deal of campaign work that had been carried on. Mr. J. A. Nicholls presented some very interesting facts concerning the campaign going on in Richmond County, on the question of repealing the Dunkin Act.

Major Bond, being compelled for private reasons to withdraw from the presidency, Mr. S. J. Carter was unanimously elected as his successor. Most of the other officers were re-elected.

The most important business transacted by the gathering was a declaration in favor of asking the Dominion Parliament to carry out the resolution adopted by the House of Commons in 1900, by enlarging the scope of the Scott Act and perfecting measures for its better enforcement.

The intention of the Convention was that such changes should be made in the Scott Act as would make it applicable to Provinces or groups of Counties, so that it would come into force over an area sufficiently large to make its enforcement practicable, and also that there should be embodied in the Act such amendments as would secure its effective enforcement.

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ITEMS OF INTEREST.

CONCERNING THE PROGRESS OF OUR CAUSE.

Drink and Death

A fearful liquor tragedy is reported from Montreal, where, on March 9th, a young man only twenty-four, and married but a short while, shot himself after a debauch.

The Result of Effort.

The President of the great tobacco trust of the United States, has recently made a statement, that during the past year the sale of cigarettes fell off twenty per cent. This is, probably, the result of the vigorous campaign that has been carried on by the W.C.T.U. and other organizations, and which has resulted in anti-cigarette legislation in many places.

Local Veto for Scotland.

Mr. R. Hunter Craig, M.P., has secured the cooperation of a number of other Scotch members of the Imperial Parliament, in a movement in favor of liquor traffic local veto legislation for Scotland. A bill has been prepared and will be introduced into the House of Commons. It will provide for the prohibition of the sale of liquor on a vote of two-thirds of the ratepayers in a locality.

Licenses Refused.

Rev. Father Strubbe, parish priest of St. Ann's, of Montreal, has been recently waging a vigorous warfare against liquor selling in his congregation. Before the License Commissioners recently he urged the refusal of four grocery licenses. His efforts were cordially commended by the Commissioners who united in granting his request. He charged the parties applying with violations of the law, and explained to the Commissioners the tricks by which they strove to conceal their unlawful practices.

Increasing Mortality.

The London, Eng., *Lancet*, reports an address recently delivered in Liverpool, by Dr. William Carter, in which he points out that recent years have shown a great falling off in the mortality resulting from every large group of diseases, excepting deaths from scurvy which have remained stationary, and deaths from intemperance which show a startling increase, having risen from 45 per million in 1878 to 77 per million in 1897.

A Drink Tragedy.

The Moscow correspondent of the English Daily Mails, gives an account of a fearful Russian catastrophe directly due to liquor. He said, "During the recent heavy snowstorms fifty men were sent to clear the snow out of a railway cutting near Wolove on the Riazan-Ural line. They were just leaving the cutting when the train came down at full speed and crushed about thirty men into shapeless masses, their clothing clogging the axles and stopping the train. Inquiry shows that the engineer and all the guards were drunk."

A Disgraceful Law.

At the annual meeting of the Quebec Alliance, held at Montreal, on March 1st, attention was drawn to certain serious evils which had sprung up in action with the liquor legislation of the Province. One of the evils specially complained of was the issuing by the Government of bottler's licenses, which were granted for a very small fee, and which authorized the holders to travel anywhere through the country peddling liquor in bottles from door to door. It was said that this system had been specially mischievous in places where

local prohibition by-laws were in operation, the liquor traffic being thus put into practical operation from house to house, in spite of the expressed desire of the people to be freed from it.

They Live Long.

The Annual Report of the Sceptre-Life Association for 1900 is very interesting. It shows that of the 623 policies issued in 1890, 444 or over 71 per cent. were on the lives of abstainers, 65 per cent. of whom were life teetotalers. The mortality experience of the year emphasizes very strongly the valuable sources from which the association derives its business. In the general section, the percentage of actual to expected deaths was 83.57, while in the Temperance section it was only 55.10, and it is interesting to note that the record has been maintained in proportion to the average for the past sixteen years, the percentage in the "General" for that period being 78.86 and in the "Temperance" 55.78.

—*Scottish Reformer.*

The Beer Poisoning.

The Local Government Board of England, has issued a report prepared by Dr. Buchanan, on the recent beer poisoning epidemic. The report states that the majority of the cases were supplied by Manchester and Salford, the approximate figures being 2,000 and 1,000 respectively. There were 36 deaths in this city from 25th November to 10th January. In many instances, the report says, the persons affected were heavy drinkers, but on the other hand many persons attacked were only moderate drinkers, and in some instances drinkers of small quantities. Only approximate ideas of the evil done are available, as many of the earlier cases had been simply classed as cases of alcoholism.

A Repeal Campaign.

Notice was given by the legal representatives of the anti temperance party in Richmond County, that there would be deposited in the County Registry Office, on March 23rd, a petition asking for a vote on the question of repealing the Dunkin Act.

The friends of temperance are determined to make a stern fight against this new attack upon a law which has been in force a long time, and has been found of substantial benefit to the community.

Mr. J. A. Nicholls is in the county perfecting organization and holding meetings in the interests of the Dunkin Act. Every effort will be made to defeat the attack of the rum party. The workers in Richmond County earnestly appeal to all friends throughout the Dominion for practical evidence of their sympathy in the form of contributions to the heavy expenses of the campaign. Dr. George Adams, of Danville, Que., is Treasurer, and will promptly acknowledge any subscriptions received.

Sir Wilfrid's View.

When the House of Commons was discussing what action ought to be taken in view of the Plebiscite, Sir Wilfrid Laurier referred to the Canada Temperance Act which was passed during the Premiership of Hon. Alexander McKenzie, and speaking of that measure and that statesman, he said:—

"The Act which he put upon the statute books was not perfect; it never was perfect; and, perhaps, as time went on, its defects were shown to exist which could have been remedied and the act made more effective. If the friends of temperance think that by perfecting the system so as to make it more workable it would be more effective in promoting temperance, I think it would be the duty of the government to give effect to that wish. But I am not sure,

from the remarks we heard a little while ago, that this would be the unanimous wish of the friends of temperance. But whether that be so or not, if the friends of temperance should signify their desire in that way, I can only say for my own part, and I think I can speak on behalf of my colleagues, that the government would be willing to respond. Looking at the question in all its aspects, I do not see that any better method could be devised at the present time to promote the cause which we all have at heart, whether we are prohibitionists or not. Legislation should only follow in the path of instruction, and that being a true principle, I do not see any other method we can adopt in order to promote the cause we have at heart.

Temperance Legislation Urged.

An interesting event in the history of the temperance cause in Great Britain was a National Conference held in Manchester, on Tuesday, February 12th, presided over by Sir W. H. Houldsworth, M.P. A number of nobleman, clergymen, members of Parliament, and other prominent people took part.

A feature of the meeting was a stirring address by Viscount Peel, who strongly advocated the legislative reforms recommended in the minority report of the Royal Commission. He also went on to express himself in favor of the ultimate control of the liquor traffic by local option law.

Resolutions were adopted stating that the time had come for a substantial instalment of temperance reform and recommending effort to secure legislation on the lines of the minority Royal Commission report.

At a mass meeting held in the Free Trade Hall, at night, rousing addresses were delivered by Rev. Dr. McLaren, Vicar, the Dean of Hereford, Rev. C. F. Aked, Lady Henry Somerset, H. J. Wilson, M.P. and Rev. Geo. Gladstone.

A BAD SYSTEM.

"Since every man has a vote . . . it follows that there exist certain wise men who understand the art of buying up votes retail, and vending them wholesale to whoever wants them most urgently. The voters thus purchased are called 'the boys,' and form a peculiar class. . . . In plain English, they are just the men in the streets who can always be trusted to rally round any cause that has a glass of liquor for a visible heart. They wait—they are on hand—and in being on hand lies the crown and glory of American politics.

"The wise man is he who, keeping a liquor saloon and judiciously dispensing drinks, knows how to retain within arms' reach a block of men who will vote for or against anything under the canopy of heaven. Not every saloon-keeper can do this. It demands careful study of city politics, tact, the power of conciliation, and infinite resources of anecdote to amuse and keep the crowd together night after night, till the saloon becomes a salon. Above all, the liquor side of the scheme must not be worked for immediate profit. The boys who drink so freely will ultimately pay their host a thousandfold. . . . The rank and file are treated to drink and a little money—and they vote.

He who controls ten votes receives a proportionate reward, the dispenser of a thousand votes is worthy of reverence, and so the chain runs on till we reach the most successful worker of public saloons—the man most skillful in keeping his items together and using them when required. Such a man governs the city as absolutely as a king. . . . A big city requires many officials. Each office carries a salary and influence worth twice the pay. The offices are for the representatives of the men who keep together and are on hand to vote."

—Rudyard Kipling.