

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, ONT.

Subscription, TWENTY-FIVE CENTS a Year.

NOTE.—It is proposed to make this 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, APRIL, 1896.

THE PRIVY COUNCIL DECISION.

Nine months have gone by since the jurisdiction question was argued before the Privy Council. The Court is not at present in session having adjourned for the Easter vacation. There is a general expectation that judgment will be given when the Court re-assembles, probably about the middle of April.

The judgment will come too late to allow of action by the Local Legislature to take effect during 1896. It is very unlikely that the delay should be extended much further. 1897 will therefore be prohibition legislation year.

In 1897 we shall have a newly elected Dominion Parliament. We shall have legislatures in session with their powers distinctly defined. We shall be in a better position than ever before to deal with the liquor question.

Now is the time for preparation, for planning, for organization, for such action as will elect a national prohibition Parliament. There is not a day to be lost. The work that is done during 1896 will be the measure of the results accomplished in 1897.

LITERATURE CIRCULATION.

In this education year we ought to have a special campaign of education work. The form of education work that is most uniformly effective at all times and under all circumstances, is the education that comes through literature circulation.

When a fight is on we have crowded meetings, pulpits are more outspoken, personal discussion does its work. The activity of these forces is lessened between the times of contest and excitement.

The Post Office is always at work. The mails continually come and go. Men and women and children read what is put into their hands. The work done by the circulation of literature is steady, persistent, and therefore specially productive of permanent good. Now is the time to scatter judicious prohibition literature broadcast in the land.

LEGISLATION IN NEW BRUNSWICK.

The New Brunswick Legislature has passed an Act providing for provincial control of the liquor traffic. Hitherto licenses have been issued by the different municipalities. The new law provides for the appointment of boards of license commissioners on the same plan as does the Ontario law. These commissioners will pass

upon all applications for licenses. License fees will be largely increased, and the proceeds after payment of expenses are to be divided between the municipality and the Provincial Government. Penalties are increased. A license is to be forfeited for the first offence of selling liquor on Sunday. A vote of the ratepayers in any ward or parish can be taken at any time before Jan. 1st, upon the question of license or no license. If a majority votes against license, no license shall be issued till such vote is reversed. Voting may take place once in three years.

UNION.

The Royal Templars in their recent Dominion Convention discussed the question of the organic union of existing temperance Orders and declared in favor of the idea. We have always warmly advocated this proposal. It ought to be carried out.

The present separation of forces is extravagant. It means weakness, division, and waste. Now that many beneficiary organizations and the development of church work among young people have circumscribed the field of temperance society effort, the harmfulness of this division is still more manifest.

The time is favourable for action. No immediate special campaign is on hand. Cannot the leaders of the temperance societies of Canada take a little time for consultation and work towards the desirable, the necessary union of the forces that ought to be not only harmoniously co-operating, but strong in the power that must come from judicious unification.

THE TRAIL OF THE SERPENT.

In an article entitled "Crime's Wild Reign" the New York Voice recently gave a list of nineteen terrible instances of outrageous brutality caused through drink, nearly every one of which resulted in the loss of life. Some of the victims were helpless women and children. In some cases the crimes were accompanied with torture that is almost incredible.

Our own country has a record smaller, our population being less, but of much the same character. Not a day passes without furnishing its quota of crime and cruelty, the direct result of the law protected liquor traffic. No war, no earthquake, no pestilence, ever produces such awful results.

It seems almost incredible that in the face of these terrible conditions, public opinion is so apathetic in relation to the drink curse. Evils not at all so productive of disaster call forth more interest and receive more attention. It seems as if our familiarity with the consequences of this fearful national crime, and the hold that the liquor traffic has secured upon the financial interests of the community, had together stupefied our national moral sense.

No other public question is weighty with so much possibility of weal or woe for the homes and families of our land as is this great drink question. Beside it the issues which divide the country are trivial. What is the matter?

Is it not true that even the most earnest friends of the temperance cause have not yet realized the importance of the movement they advocate? Is it not true that though talk has been plentiful, there have been too few professed Christians ready to sacrifice their political prejudices for the sake of humanity and the glory of God? If our earnest, avowed friends took hold of this question with half the energy, determination and

prudence that our enemies display, no technicalities, interest or tricks could prevent the absolute and immediate wiping out of this legalized iniquity.

PROHIBITION IN NORWAY.

The hearts of temperance reformers all over the world will be filled with encouragement and thankfulness when they learn of the great progress that has been made in active prohibition work in the northern part of Europe. Norway has for a number of years dealt with the liquor traffic by the peculiar method known as the Norwegian System. The chief feature of this system is that a monopoly of the retail liquor business in a municipality is handed over to a joint stock company, which company binds itself to pay to its shareholders no larger dividend than five per cent per annum on its paid-up capital. All other profits are to be devoted to the encouragement of educational institutions, benevolent societies, charities and other public uses. Indeed one of the objects of the bounty of these companies has been the temperance cause, which has yearly received a share of the profits of the liquor business.

The law also provides for local option. The people in different localities have a right to totally prohibit the liquor traffic and end its power. Large tracts of the rural part of the country have been cleared of legalized facilities for intemperance.

Lately still further progress has been made, an interesting account of which has been written for the Voice by Prof. R. A. Jernberg of Chicago. The first step leading to the gains made was the election to the Norwegian Parliament of Mr. Sven Aarrestad, President of the National Temperance Society. Mr. Aarrestad introduced and succeeded in carrying through Parliament, a bill giving women the right to vote on the liquor question. The old law about monopoly to sell liquor still remains, but before it can be acted upon the question of prohibition is submitted to a vote of all the men and women over twenty-five years of age in a locality. A vote for prohibition does not however prevail unless a majority of all who have the right to vote declare in favor of it.

This bill became law in 1894. The interest taken in the following elections may be readily imagined. Earnest women took the field in vigorous campaign in favor of prohibition. About half the cities and towns of Norway have voted out the liquor traffic. A number more are pretty certain to follow their example next fall, at which time the licenses of the old companies in these places expire and the people will have an opportunity to decide whether or not they shall be renewed.

The victory obtained in the last elections was a wonderful one. Of all the towns that voted, only two reported votes sufficient to allow a continuance of the liquor traffic. The whole country was stirred, the movement largely having a religious character, and the results were celebrated with praise services all over the kingdom.

PLEDGING CANDIDATES.

Over and over again have we urged upon our readers the wisdom of making themselves active in political organizations, so that they may be potential and influential in securing the nomination of candidates who are sound prohibitionists. We have many enthusiastic prohibition advocates who talk loudly about the duty of voting only for prohibitionists, but who never take any practical steps to secure the

placing of prohibitionists in the field as political candidates. As matters at present stand, it is in most cases too late to accomplish much when the elections are actually upon us. Both parties have selected their candidates beforehand. In many cases neither of the candidates sympathizes with temperance, and there is often little choice between them. The temperance voter in such circumstances is unable to use his ballot to advance the cause that has so strong a place in his sympathies.

The remedy is not to get out of the political parties, but to get into the political parties, to take a hand in their plans and actions. There is scarcely a constituency in the Dominion in which a few earnest temperance men could not control the nomination in one (or both) of the parties so as to secure a temperance candidate, selected under such circumstances as would make his election far more likely than if he were named as an independent. To some workers this line of action would not be agreeable. If we have not friends enough willing to take it regardless of personal feelings, our cause is not in a very hopeful condition.

Prohibitionists controlled the Liberal nomination in Colchester N. S., a couple of weeks ago. The result was that the Liberal party nominated Mr. Firman McClure, one of the leading prohibition workers of the province. Similar action has been taken in some other cases so that there are before the people a number of both parties who can be relied upon to support prohibition in Parliament. There are in the House of Commons to-day Conservatives and Liberals who never fail to stand up to be counted on the right side. Wise, determined action on the part of those who believe in the suppression of the liquor party would give us a majority of such men in the Parliament shortly to be elected.

ORGANIZATION.

We continue to urge upon our readers the necessity for immediate definite action on the line of getting our forces ready for the approaching general election campaign. The reasons for this course are simply the immense importance of organized action and our present deficiency in the matter. Prohibitionists have not yet sufficiently realized the fact that they must be wisely united, acting persistently and systematically before they can attain the end they have in view.

The people of Canada believe in prohibition. They earnestly desire prohibition. They fail to secure prohibition. Why?

To some extent, because they have not yet deserved success by adopting the simple methods that always have been, and always will be, effective.

A few men, disciplined, co-operating, wisely directed, will rout a mob ten times their number. Our daily life crowds upon us other equally forcible illustrations. Even in temperance work our experience ought to have taught us the same lesson. In many a local contest for restricting the traffic we have organized and won. We can only win in the wider field of national politics by the same common sense plan.

This paper will reach many thousands of earnest workers outside our regular subscribers. We therefore devote a good deal of space to this incalculably important question of organization, repeating in many cases what we have already said, and earnestly urging our many friends to take immediate steps to secure that preparation which will be the measure of our success in the approaching contest.