



War Notes.

NOVEMBER 2, 1896.

THE CHALLENGE.

The prohibition resolution that was offered to parliament when Mr. Mackenzie was premier was adopted with a rider which rendered it inert. It was declared that prohibition was the right cure for the evils caused by liquor, and that it should be adopted as soon as the country should be ready for it. From that day till now it has been very difficult to get any nearer to the question than this. It is at least satisfactory that parliament has again and again declared that prohibition is the proper remedy for the liquor evil. It only therefore remains to show that the country is ready for it. The party now in power is taking means to find out whether the country is ready for it or not. The Prohibitionists who have all along declared that the country was ready for it are now challenged to show that they are right. Who are the Prohibitionists to whom this challenge comes? They are the temperance orders, unions and organizations. They are the Christian Endeavor societies, leagues and guilds and Young Men's Christian Associations, all of which, or almost all, have declared that anything short of prohibition is a public wrong. They are the churches, most all of which have almost unanimously declared in the strongest language they could formulate that the sale of liquor cannot be licensed without sin. It is for these to accept the challenge and carry the country, if they can, overwhelmingly on the side of their contention.

THE PLEBISCITE.

The adoption by the Liberal party some years ago of the plebiscite method of dealing with the prohibition question has been naturally attributed to the influence in the party caucus of men of such strong personality and pronounced prohibition convictions as Mr. Fisher, who has evidently carried into the council chamber of the Cabinet the banner which he has never in any way failed to keep in public view. An argument by Mr. Fisher on behalf of prohibition will appear in another number. The Prohibitionists of the country have never as a body asked for the plebiscite. Indeed, when there was at one time a move to induce them to approach their object in this way they vigorously opposed the proposal. They did this for two reasons. First, because the principle of plebiscite was not universally believed in. Mr. Mackenzie had declared it alien to the British constitution and subversive of the principles of parliamentary government. The Prohibitionists, therefore, felt that by demanding a plebiscite on the prohibition question they would range against them in parliament both the open enemies of prohibition and the opponents of the principle of plebiscite, and that there were many who would on a direct issue be constrained to vote for prohibition who would be glad to avail themselves of a cry for the defence of the British constitution to evade voting in its favor. The other reason was that a leading idea in their effort to secure a parliamentary vote was to commit the members on one side or the other of the direct question of prohibition,

so as to let the prohibitionist voters in the constituencies know whom they could trust with this question. This plebiscite proposal did not offer to parliament a direct issue. Neither of these reasons for declining to adopt prohibition as our policy apply when a political party of its own motion adopts the plebiscite as a preliminary precaution to granting prohibition. Under these circumstances 'til the temperance people have to do is to see to it that the country votes right.

CIVIL LAW MUST BE RESPECTED.

A CATHOLIC PRIEST WARNS HIS PEOPLE.

A prominent Catholic priest of this province, after a vote on the Dunkin Act had been taken in his county, and a large majority polled in favor of the act, spoke to his people from the pulpit thus:—

'The Catholic Church would stand by civil law, and that it was his duty to give all the aid in his power to the enforcement of a law that the people of the country had so emphatically declared for.' The reverend



father went on to argue that the Church had always favored temperance, but that previously, because there were doubts as to the validity of the Dunkin Act, he had not exercised the power vested in him against those of his people who disobeyed it. There was no longer any doubt about this matter, and hereafter the ordinances and benefits of the Catholic religion would be rigorously withheld from all those who violate the law in any way. 'At your peril,' said the priest, 'I charge you all to pay implicit obedience to the law, and I wish you to avoid treating with liquor in your houses. BANISH IT ALTOGETHER.'

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVORERS AND THE PLEBISCITE.

The great Interprovincial Convention at Ottawa adopted the following resolution expressing the duty of Christian Endeavorers towards the Plebiscite:—

'That this convention of Christian Endeavorers affirms its conviction that the liquor traffic is the most potent power for evil in our country and the greatest barrier to the extension of Christ's Kingdom on the earth and, therefore, it is the duty of every Christian Endeavorer to continue to antagonize this evil until it shall be completely overthrown.

That whereas the government of Canada has declared that the question of the prohibition of the liquor traffic shall be submitted to the vote of the people of Canada through a plebiscite, in the near future, and whereas the premier has given the promise that the will of the people thus expressed shall be given effect to in a Dominion statute. Therefore it is resolved that this convention of Canadian Christian Endeavorers

recognize the immense importance of rolling up such a vote in favor of prohibition as shall unquestionably prove to the government of our country and to the whole world that the Canadian people are no longer willing that the traffic shall continue to receive the legal sanction of government by any form of license, but that it be banished forever from our land by the strong arm of Canadian law.

'That the Christian Endeavorers throughout Canada be prepared to heartily co-operate with other temperance workers in their respective localities in united plebiscite action. That all temperance committees be urged to give special attention to the free distribution of prohibition literature, to the holding of public meetings at which the subject of prohibition shall be discussed, and in every way possible keep the question before the people until the plebiscite vote be taken.'

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS.

Local Option in Quebec.

The municipal elections will soon be on. This will be a grand opportunity for testing the temperance sentiment of each municipality. Temperance workers should see to it that temperance candidates are brought out, and the question made a direct issue in the January elections.

In the Province of Quebec each municipal council outside of the cities has the power to deal with the liquor traffic in three ways:

First, by passing a by-law prohibiting the issuing of any license for the sale of intoxicating liquor by retail.

Second, by passing a by-law limiting the number of licenses.

Third, by refusing to confirm any and every application that is made to the council for confirmation of a licensee's certificate, without which no license can be issued.

Local Option in Ontario.

The Ontario legislation providing for the enactment of municipal by-laws prohibiting the sale of liquor is in the following terms:—

'The council of every township, city, town or village may pass a by-law for prohibiting the sale by retail of liquors, fermented or other manufactured liquors, in any tavern, inn or any other house or place of public entertainment; and for prohibiting altogether the sale thereof in shops and places other than houses of public entertainment: Provided that the by-law before the final passing thereof has been duly approved of by the electors of the municipality in the manner provided by the sections in that behalf of the Municipal Act.'

'No by-law passed under the provision of this section shall be repealed by the council passing the same, until after the expiration of three years from the day of its coming into force, nor until a by-law for that purpose shall have been submitted to the electors and approved by them in the same manner as the original by-law, and if any such repealing by-law (upon being submitted to the electors) is not so approved, no other repealing by-law shall be submitted for the like approval within the full term of three years thereafter.'

These sections are so plain as to require little comment. Under them the liquor traffic may be absolutely wiped out in rural municipalities where it would be entirely unprofitable to pay the high fee required for authority to sell liquor in wholesale quantities, which sales are necessarily limited even in populous places.

THE BALLOT.

In the Ontario plebiscite, the ballot paper used was in this form:—

	Are you in favor of the immediate prohibition by law, of the importation, manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors as a beverage.
	YES.
	NO.

In the Dominion plebiscite to be taken it is probable the same form will be used; it expresses fully the question at issue.