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THE Canadian Trade Review

JOHN HAGUE, Editor.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, JULY 6, 1894.

THE PROHIBITION CONVENTION.

The prohibition convention held in this city illustrates the hacknied line, "Hope spring eternal in the human breast," for Hope is not only now, but will ever be the inspiration of this movement. It has the element of perpetuity as ineradicably rooted in its constitution as any other human passion or weakness. We say "any other passion," because the tap-root of this agitation is the same as that which led to the first tragedy on record, the passion for supremacy, the desire of men to control the actions of their fellow creatures, and to punish them for adopting a different course to that for which they have shown a preference. This love of controlling, of ordering the actions of others is an instinct of our race. Whoever has watched nursery life knows that it is the earliest to manifest itself. Some youngsters are hardly

on their legs before this breaks out in efforts to bring the constituted authorities in that sphere and others who are under their care, under subjection to some infantile tyrant, who desires to lay down laws for mamma, and his or her companions, so that we often see the dominating spirit of prohibition very troublesome in the realm of babyhood. As strength increases this passion develops, unless parents have sense enough to suppress it by wise discipline. If this is not exercised we get the spoiled child, who is the prohibitionist in embryo. Indeed we are satisfied that this movement is the outcome of that looseness in the management of children which is one of the regrettable features of the age. Prohibitionists are spoiled children who are trying to carry their tyranny in the nursery into the larger sphere of adult life. We have some sympathy with persons who all through the formative period of childhood's years, have been deprived of the blessing of the "rod" or the firm hand of absolute parental control. It is quite natural for them to have a passionate longing to "boos" their fellow creatures, such as they were allowed to indulge in over their complacent or weaker companions in the home circle. At the same time there is another instinct which is quite as ineradicable and a far nobler one that presents an insurmountable barrier to the absolute dominance of such ill trained natures. The love of tyrannizing over others is one of the most contemptible of human passions, but the love of personal liberty is one of the noblest characteristics of humanity. A brute beast may have the former, but the latter is the glory alone of man, for it is a spark of divine fire, a spark which must be utterly extinguished before prohibition can be triumphant.

If those very estimable persons whose virtues give a respectability to this movement which is not inherent in itself, will allow us to tender them a little friendly advice we would recommend them for their own sakes to be a little more particular than they now are in selecting the representative advocates of their cause. Where the carcass is there will the foul birds gather. It is a melancholy sight to see worthy men and women misguided though they be, on the same platform as some who are in their movement for the meanest of objects, who would not be tolerated but for their having drawn the wool over the eyes of the leaders by their fanatical vaporings which the vulgar consider to be eloquence. Prohibition is a rich mine to a disreputable class of men who have a rush of coarse words to the mouth, but an utter dearth of ideas that show their source to have been intellectual. The cause of temperance has suffered much from hired spouters for cash, whose coarseness, illiteracy, shameless vituperation, exaggerations, falsehoods, excite the disgust of educated men and refined women. No person can hear such language as they are paid to pour out, like the outlet of a sewer, without suffering a depravation of taste and having the memory stained with revolting expressions. The better, the