

# 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 present campaign for prohibition legislation in Ontario it will be of intense interest and great value.**

## THE PROHIBITION BILL.

As matters now stand the prohibition bill before the Legislature, and which has passed its second reading, provides for as strong and effective a measure of Provincial prohibition as it is within the power of the Legislature to enact. Too much importance cannot be attached to this fact. Strenuous efforts are being made by the liquor party to discredit the law and make it appear as a partial and lax piece of legislation. It is really in the most effective and rigid form which earnest and well qualified prohibitionists could devise.

The act, if passed by the Legislature, will be submitted to a vote of the electors qualified to vote at the election of members for the Legislative Assembly. Voting will take place upon a date in November not yet decided upon, and will be subject to all the provisions of the election law regarding corrupt practices, closing of saloons and the other conditions to secure a fair expression of public opinion.

To bring the bill into force in the Province, it must be ratified by a majority of the votes cast, which must also be a majority of the total vote polled in the Legislative Assembly elections of 1898. The total vote polled at that time was 426,976. To secure prohibition there must, therefore, be cast in favor of the present measure 213,489

If 213,489 votes are cast in favor of the bill, the Lieutenant-Governor in Council shall issue a proclamation which will bring the act into operation on the first day of May, 1904.

## THE UNFAIR CONDITIONS.

In the debate in the Legislature of the Prohibition Bill, discussion waxed warm over the question of whether or not the referendum was a constitutional or British method of legislating. With the exception of Mr. Marter, the speakers devoted comparatively little attention to the much greater violation of all principles of British fair play contained in the provision that a majority of the votes cast for prohibition should not prevail unless the total vote cast amounted to 213,489. As the bill stands, the liquor men may

unite to stay at home and yet win even though they should be in a minority of 200,000 of the votes cast.

This unjust proposal is of so ridiculous a character that it is hard to understand how the members of the Government can place themselves in the unenviable position of adopting, to defeat the prohibitionists, an expedient so utterly illogical as to be absolutely grotesque. No man of them is stupid enough to fail to see the foolishness of submitting to the electors the question of prohibition, and making its approval conditional upon the polling of a majority equal to a majority of another vote polled four years previously on a totally different issue. The liquor men must laugh in their sleeves at the palpably farcical character of the absurd scheme by which their selfish interests are so cleverly protected and promoted.

Unfortunately, the farce becomes a tragedy when this unreasonable and nonsensical scheme is used for the purpose of blocking a movement which aims at checking a fearful evil that is bringing degradation and sin, sorrow and ruin to thousands of Canadian homes. It is hard to find words strong enough to fittingly describe the discreditable method of professedly offering a remedy for these terrible evils while prescribing conditions to make the remedy unattainable.

The total vote polled for prohibition in Ontario in the plebiscite of 1898 was 154,498. Sir Wilfrid Laurier stated that the vote polled on that occasion was "under the circumstances a large one." To win under the proposed conditions of the coming referendum, prohibitionists would have to increase this vote by 58,991, that is, by over thirty-eight per cent. The total men's votes polled in the plebiscite of 1894 was 180,087. This was admitted by everybody to be a vote of great magnitude and a strong expression of public opinion. The new requirement is that prohibition will not be carried unless the vote polled in its favor is 33,402, or more than twenty-four per cent. greater than the great vote of 1894. It is a handicap that cannot be justified on any ground of probability or any principle of fair play.

The bill before the House makes it possible for prohibitionists to poll a vote of more than double that of the liquor party, and yet have the legislation they support defeated, while the views of a comparatively small minority may prevail. It proposes the double injustice of defeating the expressed will of a great majority and insisting that the will of a comparatively few may decide what form of legislation shall prevail. It is legislation in the interests of the liquor party, and class legislation of the most flagrant kind.

The temperance workers of Ontario have never yet shrunk from any

fight, however difficult or uncertain. They have voted twice for prohibition, recording majorities strong enough to justify definite and thoroughgoing legislation. No government or legislature has a right to impose upon them such conditions as those with which this bill proposes to fetter their efforts. A direct refusal to carry out the Government's promise would be more straightforward than this attempt to prevent what the bill professes to grant.

Probably never before in the history of democratic government was there proposed any legislative method so illogical, so one-sided and so unjust. It ought to call forth the indignation of every friend of the temperance cause, of every lover of equal rights, of every honest citizen. It ought to be rejected by the Legislature, which body may thus save itself from the charge of undignified trickery and inexcusable injustice.

## PROVINCIAL PROHIBITION

In the hot controversy that has been going on over the terms of the proposed referendum, temperance workers have paid too little attention to the clever campaign of misrepresentation that has been carried on concerning the legislation upon which the people are to be asked to vote.

The liquor party have endeavored to make it appear that the new law is full of loopholes and defects, permitting forms of liquor selling and tending to bring about conditions which they profess to deplore. They are specially diligent in making it appear that the law will encourage liquor selling in drug stores, and home drinking.

Briefly stated, the new law absolutely prohibits all sale or keeping for sale of intoxicating liquor by any person in the Province of Ontario except under the following conditions: (1) Wholesale druggists who are specially licensed may sell under rigid restrictions for mechanical and scientific purposes, and to registered medical men and specially licensed druggists. (2) Retail druggists who are specially licensed may sell under similar restrictions for medicinal or sacramental purposes.

The provisions for the carrying out of this prohibition are of the most complete and effective character, including requirements of certificates and prescriptions from qualified professional men and sworn official returns of all sales made. The specially licensed druggists will be under much stricter restrictions than those that now govern all druggists under the license law.

Buying for home use is absolutely prohibited unless the liquor is purchased from some person in another province or country. No sale or giving of liquor in clubs or shops or offices is in any way permitted. The law is about as rigid a measure of

provincial prohibition as it is possible to devise, under the powers that a legislature possesses. It is the strictest prohibition that it is now possible for us to secure.

Anyone who sells, or keeps for sale, or gives away, liquor unlawfully, any licensed druggist who sells in an unlawful place or an unlawful quantity, or allows liquor lawfully sold to be drunk on his premises, any one who supplies liquor to an illicit seller, and anyone who sells or gives liquor in any club, is liable for a first offence to a fine of not less than \$200 nor more than \$1,000, and in default of immediate payment to imprisonment for from three to six months, and for a second offence to imprisonment for not less than six months nor more than twelve months. If a licensed druggist or his agent is the offender, the license is forfeited and cannot be renewed for three years.

Any specially licensed druggist who sells without proper affidavit or other authority or fails to make and report record of sales, any person knowingly using liquor unlawfully purchased or consuming liquor on premises where sold, any physician, dentist or veterinary surgeon who uses his position to aid in the evasion of the law, and any person who gives liquor to a minor without authority of father, mother, guardian or physician, is liable for a first offence to a fine of not less than fifty dollars nor more than three hundred dollars, and in default of immediate payment to imprisonment for from two to four months; and for a second offence to a fine of not less than \$100 nor more than \$500, and in default of immediate payment to imprisonment for from four to eight months, with similar provisions about forfeiture of license and disqualification of licensee.

As a measure of prohibitory legislation this law is far ahead of anything ever before drafted in this country. It is not fair to compare it with the Scott Act or any other measure more local in its nature or less stringent in its provisions. It is an honest attempt to devise the most effective kind of prohibitory law. It was the work of skilled and experienced professional men in Manitoba, who were also earnest advocates of total prohibition.

## THE BAR.

A poet has said of the saloon that it is appropriately called a bar:  
A bar to heaven, a door to hell,  
Whoever named it, named it well.  
A bar to manliness and wealth,  
A door to want and broken health.  
A bar to honor, pride and fame,  
A door to sin and grief and shame;  
A bar to hope, a bar to prayer,  
A door to darkness and despair;  
A bar to honored, useful life,  
A door to brawling, senseless strife;  
A bar to all that's true and brave,  
A door to every drunkard's grave;  
A bar to joy that home imparts,  
A door to tears and aching hearts;  
A bar to heaven, a door to hell,  
Whoever named it, named it well.  
—National Advocate