

ories will reveal some very interesting facts. If we go into the early history of the country, we will find a very wise administration prohibiting the introduction of rum into the interior, so that, away from the more central trading posts, the employees of the fur companies and the natives were protected from the deadly curse. But the annual trips to the larger ports were usually signalized by orgies of the most revolting character. Indians, half-breeds, and traders alike fell under the debasing influence of the fire-water, and oftentimes left the forts to return to their far-off homes in debt for the few articles procured, which debt must be discharged by the furs gathered during the coming winter's hunt. I have been told that frequently an Indian would sell his pony for a gallon of rum, and during these periods the company would very carefully bar the gates, otherwise left unguarded.

With the entry into Confederation a very welcome change came. The sale of all intoxicants to those considered minors was prohibited. In the earlier history of the North-West Territories, this principle of prohibition was widened, so that from the western boundary of Manitoba, a little east of Brandon, to the Rocky Mountains the prohibition of the liquor traffic was absolute. During the regime of an executive in fullest sympathy with the provisions and intent of the law, prohibition did prohibit. While Governor Laird held the reins of administration, drunkenness in that vast district was practically unknown. Devices to evade the law were resorted to, such as boxes of painkiller, castor-oil, bottles in frozen rabbits and geese, and false tops and bottoms in sugar barrels, etc. And yet with all these instruments of the devil, and his numerous agents high and low, the law was well enforced, until an executive came into power that was in strong sympathy with the drinking usages, and by a free and indiscriminate use of 'permits,' which covered everything from unfermented sacramental wine to Irish rye, brought this truly splendid law into disrepute. In one instance, which came under my own notice, liquor was procured on a permit given, for a period of eighteen months after the recipient of said permit had been dead.

The Dominion Law, regarding the use of intoxicants, was so rigidly enforced during a large portion of the time that the C. P. R. was building its main line, that an American gentleman, noticing the excellent order preserved, as cars crowded with navvies were moving out to work from Moose Jaw, said, 'If this were on our side of the line, there would be drinking, profanity, blows, and possibly broken heads and limbs.'

The advent of the Lieutenant-Governor who first introduced four percent beer was a cause of deep sorrow to the Territories, and the license law, passed in 1892, was a protest from the people against the lax administration of one of the best laws the Dominion Government ever enacted. During two full years my memory does not recall an arrest in Regina for drunkenness under the permit system, badly administered though it was, but within three weeks after the license law came into force there were two arrests, and within three months the town, which existed for nearly ten years without any civic police, felt compelled to protect its citizens by the appointment of a constable. This looks very much like retrogressive progress.

Turning to Manitoba, we will see that while there are still a large number of licenses granted, the electors are growing tired of the tyrant that is cursing and blasting our fair province. In 1899 an Assembly

was elected pledged to give the province 'A measure which shall give effect to the will of the people regarding prohibition of the liquor traffic, which measure shall go as far in the direction of prohibition as the powers of the province will allow.' In harmony with this pledge, such a 'measure' was prepared by one of the best legal firms of the province, and was passed at the last session of our Local Assembly, to come into force on June 1, 1901. We will look at the steps which led to this consummation.

In the early '70's Thos. Nixon, Esq., came to Manitoba, holding an appointment from the Dominion Government. He at once entered upon his beloved work of organizing the temperance forces for aggressive action, and established the first lodge of I. O. G. T. Mr. Nixon has been frequently honored by his brethren, and has represented them at international gatherings in Europe and in the United States. Closely following this step, he became the central figure of the Blue Ribbon movement, which held gospel temperance meetings for some years, on Sabbath afternoons, and always kept their pledge-book open for signatures. The 'Canada Temperance Act' being passed, it was thought well to organize the whole province for a campaign before large vested rights should be acquired. To do this more effectively a provincial branch of the Dominion Alliance was formed in 1879, with the Hon. J. W. Sifton as president. Some friend remarked to Mr. Sifton that such an act on his part might cost him his seat in the Local Assembly, but his truly patriotic answer was, 'If I must choose between my seat in the House and the presidency of the Alliance, I will choose that office that will enable my influence to tell most strongly in moral reform.' The campaign was most successful, and we carried the 'Act' in Marquette with a large majority, but the courts threw it out on a technicality. Our labor was not lost. Meetings were held throughout the Province, and branches of the Alliance organized everywhere. The conditions of local option, made possible by the Provincial statutes, were so successfully operated, that two-thirds of the Province were under practical prohibition.

The general interest was awakened. Organizations multiplied. One temperance society, not believing in denying any 'good creature of God' to his children, pledged its members simply to partake in moderation, but just where the line of moderation existed was hard to define. The president of one of the branches, of which the writer had personal knowledge, found the line in a state of hilarious intoxication. Other organizations quickly followed. The W. C. T. U. was organized in 1882 by the gifted and now sainted Miss Willard, and their work has been prosecuted under the direction of such elect ladies as Mrs. Chisholm, Mrs. Dolsen, Dr. A. Yeomans, Mrs. G. H. Mills, and others too numerous to mention. The most important educative work done by this organization is in the introduction of the study of temperance, and the nature of alcohol and tobacco, and their effect on the human organism, into our public school system, and it is in this that their influence will be most permanently felt. They also held monthly 'mothers' meetings' at which were very fully discussed the question of 'social purity,' and parental and related functions were studied with very good results. The R. T. of T. organization was effected under the very able and efficient direction of the Rev. J. W. Bell, B.D., and W. W. Buchanan, Esq. The chief value of these organizations was found in the splendid work which was done by their Gospel temperance evangelists throughout the Province and Territories. No one can estimate the lasting benefit received from such services as those rendered by the 'Emerald Trio,' Mrs. Bessie Keefer, and, later, by the Rev. E. O. Taylor. The combined efforts served to greatly awaken the public conscience, and most marked results followed.

During the '80's many deputations, union and individual, waited on the Government, asking for measures and amendments, many of which were not in harmony with each other. The Government very naturally said, 'You temperance people do not know what you do want.' The Alliance, for some reason, had lost the confidence of the people, and to unite the various factions the leaders of the temperance forces formed, under the very energetic presidency of W. R. Mullock, Esq., 'The Prohibition League,' which was composed of delegates elected by each of the existing organizations. The first act of the 'League' was to petition the Government to give the first 'plebiscite' ever taken in Canada on this question. This resulted in giving the splendid majority for prohibition of 12,522, and the return to power, with a tremendous majority, of the Government granting the 'plebiscite.' So strongly did our legislators feel the force of this argument, that when a memorial was moved in the 'House,' asking the Dominion Government to give the Province power to deal with the question in harmony with the expressed will of the people, only one member of the Assembly voted against the measure. The Government, however, failed to give effect to this mandate of the electorate by crystallizing this voice into law. The electors grew tired of fair promises and cordial assurance, and some very active and wide-awake temperance people showed the country what could be done under more definite organization. In the autumn of 1897, a few ardent workers decided on the plan of pledging the electors to support only men of known prohibition principles. Three days' active canvass succeeded in pledging over seventy voters, and when the result was tested at a by-election, a former majority of twenty-three was converted into a defeat of 150, and so another page of progress was turned.

This action on the part of the temperance forces presented a new line of argument which they proposed to adopt, and gave one of the existing political parties courage to place a prohibition plank in their platform. This was done, I understand, at the instance of T. E. Greenwood, Esq., and the following election was one of the greatest surprises that has ever been sprung upon a Province. I think none but ultra partisans will question the reason for this wonderful overturn. The party, elected on this platform, immediately prepared to redeem their pledge. Correspondence was entered into with officials in prohibition States, and prominent prohibitionists in the United States, and the aforesaid law firm, assisted by some of the best prohibition thought of the Province, prepared the measure known as 'The Liquor Act,' which was passed, with some amendments, by the Assembly last July. The provisions of this 'Act' are such that if it be within the scope of provincial power, and administered by an executive honestly determined to carry out its conditions, the traffic in intoxicating liquors would be stamped out in one year; but in the hands of an executive disposed to cater to the liquor party, the result may be quite different. That the 'Act' is within the powers of the Province many still believe, notwithstanding the decision recently handed down by their Lordships. The reference of the 'Act' to the Privy Council means that in any case it cannot come into force before June, 1902, and we must endure another year of license. This, however, will be preferable to a year of uncertainty.

The Find-the-Place Almanac

TEXTS IN THE PSALMS.

July 28, Sun.—The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength in whom I will trust.

July 29, Mon.—The Lord my God will enlighten my darkness.

July 30, Tues.—Thou hast given me the shield of thy salvation.

July 31, Wed.—The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork.

Aug. 1, Thurs.—Cleanse thou me from secret faults.

Aug. 2, Fri.—Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord.

Aug. 3, Sat.—We will rejoice in thy salvation.