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The Temperance Worker

PUBLISHERS' NOTES.

With every desire to make this paper a means of usefulness to the various temperance organizations whose cause it heartily espouses we are necessarily dependent on those organizations themselves for the items of news and we should be much pleased if they would kindly see that they are regularly supplied to us.

A comprehensive epitome of the news of the week from all quarters of the globe, combined with a great variety of household and home reading, frequently illustrated, together with an organ of temperance sentiment and intelligence for the Dominion of Canada, published at fifty cents a year, or forty cents in single orders of ten copies, is one of the very best offers ever made to the reading public of this country, and the steady increase in the circulation of the *Weekly Messenger and Temperance Worker* shows that its qualities and price are alike being appreciated wherever it finds its way. Every effort of our friends to extend the paper's influence will be gratefully accepted as a favor and an encouragement in our work. Address all orders to JOHN DOUGALL & SONS, Montreal, Q.

THE NEW LIQUOR LAW.

Much diversity of opinion is expressed regarding the qualities of the new liquor-regulating law. Some of the press speak of it as the most stringent liquor law yet devised in this country; others declare the opinion that it is complicated and impracticable of operation. Some temperance men in the Upper Provinces regard it as in some respects marking a clear advance in legislation, while others consider it wanting in simplicity and more careful of the liquor interests than of the public good in many points. Opinions upon both sides are, however, largely cast in the mould of the political party of those expressing them. While it is undoubted that the measure is a compromise, experience alone will afford a satisfactory test of its nature in all respects. Nova Scotia and Manitoba, having already very stringent anti-liquor laws, naturally do not take kindly to the new Dominion legislation. The Nova Scotia Branch of the Dominion Alliance and the Halifax County Convention both protested strongly, but too late, against the passage of the bill. A temperance convention held in Winnipeg, said to be the most representative one ever held there, adopted the following telegram to Sir John Macdonald:—"Representative men from all portions of the Province of Manitoba assembled in Winnipeg strongly object to license law now before the House, particularly as to Sunday opening, extension of hours on Saturday night, unlimited number of saloons and licenses along railways, and ask two-thirds regulations for applicants yearly; and that the act should be more stringent instead of more lax, than the present laws." Below we give a brief account of the principal changes hurriedly made in the

measure upon its final reading in the House of Commons. The first was that the power to prohibit held by Quebec municipalities at Confederation should not be abrogated by the Act. If we are under a correct impression a similar privilege in Ontario was superseded by subsequent local legislation, and possibly may be revived as a natural consequence of local legislation being declared judicially, as it has been politically, to be invalid. An amendment to strike out permission for hotels to sell liquor at meal-times on Sunday was lost by a vote of sixty-six to seventy-nine. Mr. White, member for Cardwell, was the author of a successful amendment very much in the interest of the liquor traffic, although professedly in favor of restriction. It was to make a three-fifths instead of a bare majority of the electors of a district necessary in order to carry the prohibitory clause in a district, and was carried by eighty-eight to sixty-three. It had been argued by the mover and some professed temperance members that prohibition would be inoperative unless sustained by a decided majority. While that is certainly plausible to some extent, it is not borne out as an infallible proposition by experience in working either restrictive license laws or the Scott Act. No matter how great the majority obtainable against the traffic, the enforcement of law against it has ever devolved upon a very few in every community, and the effectiveness of most existing restrictive measures depends almost entirely upon the possibility of obtaining a faithful guard at every point, prepared to make some sacrifice of time and means and determined to persevere. Nothing seems to have been said in Parliament as to the gross tyranny involved in allowing two-fifths of the population to force liquor shops with all their deplorable fruits and intolerable accompaniments of disorder, immorality, crime and poverty upon the remaining three-fifths. Mr. Baker, member for Victoria, British Columbia, tried to secure for his city double the proportion of liquor sellers allowed in the bill, but his remarkable philanthropy was defeated by a vote of over two to one. An amendment to provide voting by ballot upon the local option clause was carried without opposition. Compounding an offence under the Act, carrying a penalty of a fine not exceeding fifty dollars, was made punishable by imprisonment for three months at hard labor—a salutary provision calculated to deter officials from collusion with law-breakers. An amendment to add to the number of licenses allowable for places of much resort by travellers, moved by Mr. Patterson, of Essex, was lost. The municipal prohibition was made repealable by the same means as it is carried. On motion of Mr. Foster, the sale of liquor to minors under any circumstances was forbidden. An extraordinary amendment moved by Mr. Giguault, which was lost, was to allow hotel-keepers to sell quantities from an Imperial quart to a gallon, at any time to any person, not to be drunk upon the premises. Two separate amendments affirming in different terms provincial jurisdiction in the whole matter were voted down, and the

bill was read a third time and passed. We are not aware of any material amendment being made in the bill upon its hurried passage through the Senate in the closing hours of Parliament.

"OVERWHELMING SENTIMENT."

At the beginning of the Scott Act's way in Halton County, Ontario, a company leased a hotel in Milton for three years, to run it upon temperance principles, but the first year's results have discouraged the shareholders and they have sub-let the house to a man who declines to enter into obligations to maintain the temperance character of the house. According to a Milton paper, "the natural deduction is that the hotel business cannot be made to pay unless combined with that of selling liquor, except where there is such an overwhelming sentiment in favor of prohibition as to cause the general public to deny their patronage to all but *bona fide* 'temperance houses.'" An equally "natural deduction" to the above, and the proper one to be drawn from the facts, is that a serious neglect of known duty has occurred in the district in question, when a temperance hotel was allowed to be swamped by illicit competitors. As to "overwhelming sentiment" being the one thing lacking, something more than flippant assertion, in Parliament and out of it, is required to convince any temperance workers of experience and habits of reflection. A stringent law such as the Scott Act in the hands of the majority that carried it at the polls is an "overwhelming" force if only a few men of capacity and courage with some money are available to use the instrument with sincerity and firmness. There are not many communities in our nominally Christian country in which there is not an "overwhelming sentiment" against the evils of the liquor traffic, but it needs direction and development at the hands of a few who are by natural fitness and common consent qualified to take the lead. Public opinion, we are confident, will one day demand that the authorities shall enforce restrictive laws against the liquor traffic to the uttermost and cheerfully approve of all expenditure necessary to that end. In a new country, however, communities feel the need of a great many modern improvements that they cannot afford at once, and therefore it would be very difficult to get any body of ratepayers in Canada to make an appropriation at their annual meeting sufficient to secure the enforcement of the Scott or any other anti-liquor law. Hence private effort and funds must for a time to come be relied upon as well to carry out as to procure restrictive local option laws in a district. As at the polls the question has been whether the people desired the instrument of protection against the traffic, so after its adoption the question is whether the instrument is to be used or, to the stultification of the people, allowed to rust in idleness. Of course the stronger the sentiment on the law's side the better, but nothing is probably more calculated to promote favorable public opinion than the effective working of the measure itself. Many, for instance, profess to be opponents of the liquor business and its fruits, while disparaging the

Scott law upon various pretexts. To disarm the opposition of such if they are true friends of temperance, or to compel them to display their real character if they are foes in disguise, nothing, we imagine, would be more effectual than a period of firm administration of the measure. If there is not enough sincere temperance feeling in a county or city to give the Scott Act a fair trial after adoption, it is most marvellous how it could ever have been carried at the polls. Our belief is that the sentiment is there in every case, latent it may be but never incapable of development by means of more or less devoted and self-denying exertion upon the part of those who led the original campaign.

GOOD TEMPLARS.

The Grand Lodge of the World met in its sixth annual session in Chicago, on Tuesday of last week. About one hundred and seventy delegates were present, and the Right Worthy Grand Templar, Mr. George Katzenstein, of California, presided. Messrs. W. H. Lambly, Grand Chief of Quebec, and Right Worthy Grand Marshal, S. A. Lebourveau, Grand Secretary of Quebec, and I. J. Hingley, Grand Secretary of Nova Scotia, were present. The meeting of the Right Worthy Grand Lodge of the World, to take place in Halifax, N. S., in June, as announced in a former issue, is of another body of Good Templars—the points of variance that divided the original Order it is, however, unnecessary to relate here. Suffice it to mention the lamentable fact that costly litigation is pending between the leaders of the rival Orders in the United Kingdom.

SONS OF TEMPERANCE.

Gurney Division, St. John, N. B., celebrated its thirty-sixth anniversary last week. The chair was occupied by Mr. S. B. Patterson, who, after an opening prayer by the Rev. Job Shenton, referred in a short address to the success of the Division in temperance work and its present membership of three hundred and ten, the largest in the Province. Addresses were also delivered by Mr. C. A. Everett and the Rev. I. L. Beman, and musical entertainment and refreshments closed a successful celebration of a gratifying event.

W. C. T. UNION.

The Woman's Christian Temperance Union is moving in Ontario to procure the introduction of temperance text-books into the common and high schools.

Last week the Union in Picton, N. S., was resuscitated from a long-lasting dormancy, and the ladies resolved to take determined action in enforcing the Scott Act.

PERSONAL.

The Rev. Thomas Gales, Corresponding Secretary of the Dominion Alliance, was recently laid up with severe illness, but we are glad to report him so far recovered as to have been able to go to Ottawa to watch the passage of the new liquor law, in the interest of the Alliance, and to render excellent service.