

The Camp Fire.

A. MONTHLY JOURNAL
OF TEMPERANCE PROGRESS.

SPECIALLY DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF
THE PROHIBITION CAUSE.

Edited by F. S. SPENCE
ADDRESS - - TORONTO, ONT.

Subscription, TWENTY-FIVE CENTS a Year.

NOTE.—It is proposed to make this the cheapest Temperance paper in the world, taking into consideration its size, the matter it contains and the price at which it is published.

Every friend of temperance is earnestly requested to assist in this effort by subscribing and by sending in facts or arguments that might be of interest or use to our workers.

The editor will be thankful for correspondence upon any topic connected with the temperance reform. Our limited space will compel condensation. No letter for publication should contain more than two hundred words—if shorter, still better.

TORONTO, MAY, 1899

OUR PRESENT POSITION.

The most important recent political event affecting the history of the prohibition movement in Canada, was the second meeting of the Legislation Committee of the Dominion Alliance, held in the Railway Committee Room of the Parliament Buildings at Ottawa, on April 30th.

The Alliance Legislation Committee is composed of the members of Parliament favorable to prohibition, along with a few other persons appointed by the Dominion Alliance Annual Meeting. Sessions of the Committee are held while Parliament is sitting. A meeting on March 22nd at which forty-nine members of Parliament were present, along with the other members of the committee, adopted a resolution reported in the April CAMP FIRE, declaring that the question of prohibitory legislation ought to be brought before Parliament, and recommending the appointment of a sub-committee to consider how this could best be done.

The proposed sub-committee was appointed, and the meeting on April 20th, was called to receive its report. The sub-committee was divided in its views. A majority favored the introduction of legislation extending the scope of the Canada Temperance Act, so as to make it applicable to provinces. A minority presented a report calling upon the Government to introduce a law of prohibition for the whole Dominion.

The discussion of these reports was carried on largely on party lines. Liberal members of Parliament favored the majority report, claiming that the overwhelming vote against prohibition in the Province of Quebec, made it undesirable to ask for a prohibitory law that would include that Province, and also argued that as the Government had definitely refused to introduce a prohibitory law, a resolution requesting such action would be considered a motion of want of confidence in the Government, and would only result in a straight party division, defeating the resolution. Conservative members claimed that the opinion of prohibitionists being that the Government was in the wrong, the committee should take that ground, and secure a division in the House of Commons to show prohibitionists who were their true friends.

The meeting which was a large one, voted down both propositions and adjourned till later in the day, to allow the sub-committee to prepare another report.

When the Legislation Committee re-assembled, the sub-committee presented another report, which will be found in the circular published on the first page of this paper, under sub-heading "Report on plan of Action." This report was adopted without any dissenting vote, although not meeting the views of those who favored the policy of urging the Government to introduce prohibition legislation for the whole Dominion.

The meeting also appointed the following committee, to carry out the decision that had been made:—Hon. A. Vidal; Hon. J. C. Aikins; Dr. Thomas Christie, M. P.; John H. Bell, M. P.; T. B. Flint, M. P.; Firman McClure, M. P.; Major E. L. Bond; J. J. MacLaren, Q. C. and F. S. Spence.

On May 1st, a meeting of the Dominion Alliance was held at Toronto, to consider the situation. After much discussion the conclusions of the Committee were embodied in an "Address," which is printed in full in this paper, under the heading "A Prohibitory Law."

DISSATISFACTION.

Prohibitionists are deeply dissatisfied with the failure of the Dominion Government to introduce into Parliament legislation to carry out the mandate of the people on September 29th last.

Expressions of this dissatisfaction are resented by some prohibitionists. They claim that the overwhelming majority against prohibition in Quebec justifies the Government in not promoting a law to take effect in that Province, contrary to the overwhelming anti-prohibition vote then given.

In reply it has been urged that the Quebec vote is not a fair expression of public opinion, that Quebec is already to a great extent under prohibition, and therefore favorable to such legislation, that the French-Canadians are a law-abiding people and would not resist prohibition, and that a part of the Dominion ought to submit to the whole.

Without discussing the soundness or unsoundness of these contentions, we have no hesitation in asserting that, apart from them altogether, and even if the argument be admitted that a prohibitory law would be unjust to Quebec, there is still full justification for the dissatisfaction of the unfairly-treated prohibitionists.

If it would be wrong to take the liquor-traffic away from Quebec against the expressed will of the people, it is surely wrong to force the liquor-traffic upon the other Provinces against the expressed will of the people.

The grave mistake of the Government is its total failure to do anything at all for the greater part of the Dominion and the greater majority of the people, while it gives the people of Quebec all that they desire.

If we admit every word of the pleas that have been offered on behalf of the liquor-traffic in Quebec, the fact still remains that outside that Province, the Government refused to give the people what they asked for by a majority of 107,918 votes.

Those who argue that it was right to obey the voice of the people in Quebec, are making it clear that the Government should have taken such action as would secure prohibition for the rest of the Dominion.

If the Government had taken some such action as that recommended by the Alliance Legislation Committee at Ottawa, there would not have been any good ground for the dissatisfaction that now exists. As it is the Government has totally failed to act justly, and fairly towards the prohibitionists and merits the censure of those who believe in righteousness and equity in political affairs.

TURNING OUT THE GOVERNMENT

The Government has treated the prohibitionists badly. It is therefore strongly urged by some people that it is the duty of prohibitionists to do all they can to overthrow the Government.

This is right, provided it is clear that by overthrowing the Government we shall help the cause of prohibition, weaken the liquor traffic or mitigate the terrible evils of intemperance.

If it can be shown that turning out the Liberals and putting in the Conservatives will be of any advantage to the temperance reform, then it is our duty to use every effort to bring about the change.

Nay more! Our grievance with the Liberal leaders is that they have refused to give us the legislation for which we voted in good faith, believing that those leaders intended to obey the mandate they invited. If the leaders of the Conservative party will now declare their willingness to accept that mandate, and give us total prohibition in all the Provinces and Territories that voted for it, then it will be the duty of prohibitionists to rally round those Conservative leaders and do all that can be done to overthrow the Liberal Government and put the Conservatives in a position to redeem their promise. Will they give us the opportunity?

Unless this is done, we will be wasting our time in helping either party to simply defeat the other, and our duty is to endeavor, regardless of partizanship, to get from Parliament the legislation that the Government ought to have introduced, holding every member personally responsible for the position he takes upon the question, and uniting at next election to defeat every man who opposes what is so manifestly right, and to return a Parliament, pledged to obey the expressed will of the people.

NEW LICENSES IN ONTARIO.

During the past month the press showed that there was unusual activity on the part of the temperance people in Ontario, in effort to secure further reduction of licenses. Boards of Commissioners were beset by deputations, and earnestly urged to withhold approval of objectionable applications.

There was also manifest on the part of the liquor traffic, keen activity in endeavoring to secure better locations for existing licenses, the traffic evidently feeling that the steady decrease in the number of licenses is not likely to stop. Better business sites are therefore being sought after, and there have been many applications for transfers.

It is gratifying to be able to report that in many cases License Commissioners have been very careful, and that many applications have been refused. The report for the license year just begun will show another reduction in the number of licenses issued in Ontario.

The Dominion Government has disallowed an ordinance of the Yukon Council, respecting the sale of intoxicating liquors in the Yukon District. The Order in Council setting out the disallowance also declares that until the Yukon Council passes an ordinance respecting the liquor traffic, which meets the approval of the Dominion Government, no permits are to be issued authorizing the introduction of any liquor into the Yukon.

IMPORTANT.

TORONTO, 1899.

DEAR FRIEND,—

You are respectfully requested to carefully examine **The Camp Fire**, a neat four-page monthly Prohibition paper, full of bright, pointed, convenient facts and arguments; containing also a valuable summary of the latest news about our cause. It is just what is needed to inspire workers and make votes.

The victory won last year was only the opening of a campaign in which the liquor traffic will do its utmost to block, delay, and if possible prevent our securing the enactment and enforcement of prohibitory law. We have plenty of hard fighting ahead of us. We must keep posted and equipped, knowing all that is being done by our friends and foes, and sophistry and misrepresentation that will be advanced.

The Camp Fire will be one of the best aids you can have in the struggle. It will contain nothing but what you need. Every number ought to be preserved. You cannot afford to be without it, and the subscription price is only nominal, **Twenty-five cents per year.**

While a necessity to every prohibition worker the **The Camp Fire** will also be of special value for distribution. Literature won the plebiscite victory. We must keep up the educating work. Printed matter tells. It does its work continuously, silently, fearlessly and No form of literature is so generally read and so potential as the up-to-date periodical. It comes with the force and interest of newness and life. For this reason the form of a monthly journal has been selected.

This journal will be in every respect reliable and readable. Every article will be short, good and forcible, containing nothing sectional, sectarian or partizan. The literature of the old world and the new world will be ramsacked for the most helpful and effective material. The price is very low.

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