

Nevertheless no legislation was introduced. Other matters made the session one of much excitement, and interest, and near the close of it the Premier stated to another deputation that the Government had intended to introduce a measure of advanced and useful liquor legislation, but that their plans had been interfered with, and the measure would be held over and introduced early at the next session.

The Annual Convention of the Ontario Alliance, a very large meeting, expressed deep regret at the Government's failure to take action, and reaffirmed the demand for legislation, that had been made immediately after the voting.

The Legislature met again in 1904. Again the speech from the throne made a promise of legislation dealing with the liquor question, and again before the session closed, the Premier announced that "it is not our intention to bring in any legislation this session in regard to the Liquor License Law." It was understood that the members of the Liberal Party in the Legislature could not agree as to what measure of advanced legislation they would unite in supporting.

There was naturally much dissatisfaction throughout the country among the friends of temperance at this long delay. The Government's majority in the Legislature was very small, and it seemed probable that a new election would shortly be held.

A very largely attended convention of the Liberal party was held in Massé Hall, Toronto, commencing on November 23rd. A committee resolution unanimously recommended the convention to adopt a policy of temperance legislation, which was submitted in detail. The most progressive and use-

ful parts of this policy were opposed by members of the Government and voted down by the convention, leaving the report little more than a declaration in favor of temperance legislation, and a proposal to improve the Local Option Law. This was a practical reversal of the policy which Sir Oliver Mowat had enunciated on behalf of the party after the plebiscite of 1894.

During the same week there was held in Toronto a very large conference of representative Conservatives from different parts of the Province, and that gathering adopted a resolution declaring itself as being in full sympathy with all well-directed efforts to promote temperance. The leader of the party, Mr. J. P. Whitney, set out in the following terms, the policy concerning the liquor traffic, which he believed ought to be adopted:

"Decrease the number of licensees where necessary; maintain intact and allow no relaxation of the restrictions; remove the Commissioners and Inspectors from political and party influence, and enforce the License Law honestly and with the whole power of the Government."

There was intense disappointment among temperance workers because of the attitude thus taken by the two political parties. The Alliance issued a circular strongly denouncing the course followed by the Government, and urging friends of prohibition to take action to secure the election of legislators who would fairly represent public opinion upon the temperance question. It was generally realized that the Local Option legislation which had been neglected was the most effective weapon with which to fight the liquor traffic that would be available for some time, and work on that line was taken up almost immediately.

Meantime a new provincial election