

TRUTH.

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TRUTH'S MUSINGS.

Word comes that the great appeal case to the Privy Council of McLaren vs Caldwell, involving the Streams Bill question has been finally set at rest by a judgment in favor of Caldwell. This looks as though Mr. Mowat was right again and Sir John wrong again in their interpretation of the law. What a pow-wow there has been for years and years past about that McLaren Caldwell case! It was not so much that many people cared about the interests of the one party or the other, important as they may have been—as because the party leaders had become implicated in the issue and therefore everybody talked about it. The Tories made it as clear as noon-day that the Mississippi river, at that particular point at least, was not a floatable stream at all—that at times “a chip” would hardly float through it, and that to acknowledge the legal right for anyone to use the improvements on such a river, even by paying a reasonable toll for so doing, was an act of gross spoliation, and must never be tolerated in a free country. The Grits, on the other hand, assured the public that to acknowledge a man's sole right to a stream like that would be to rob the Province of nearly all the value of its great timber limits along over 240 streams similarly situated. Stump speeches were full of legal wise saws and modern instances in regard to the matter, for it was one of the burning questions in elections for years past.

Then, the whole question of “Provincial rights” got deeply involved in this question—more so than in any other before the country. Four times the Ontario Provincial Legislature passed an Act intended to relieve Mr. Caldwell and others similarly situated in such streams difficulties, and three times have these acts been disallowed by the Dominion authorities, as a higher political power. Whether the last Act will now be disallowed, under the circumstances, remains to be seen. It is now stated that the Streams Bill will be much more to the relief of Mr. McLaren than of Mr. Caldwell, as matters now stand. Surely it is high time that important issues like these should be settled without a political pow-wow over each case. It is high time, too, that the increasing conflict of authority between the Provincial and the Dominion governments should come to an end. These conflicts involve the tax payors of the country in great and unnecessary burdens of expense, and do much to disarrange many important business interests. The politicians and some favored lawyers may reap good harvests out of them, but no one else does.

And so the “Conspirators” have all been committed for trial! The news came like a thunderclap on some of the parties interested, and reports say that it

was too much for the nerves of at least one of the parties interested, who had to be carried out of the Police Court after the announcement was made. A *prima facie* case was evidently made out, but wait till the other side is heard! There will be some tall swearing, some big fees, some legal sharpness, and all that kind of thing before the miserable case comes to an end: Every good citizen and every honest man ought to go for fair and even justice being meted out in this matter. It is as clear as noon day that there is a wicked black conspiracy on the one side or the other. Either base men were in conspiracy to buy up members of the Legislature and by bribery and pollution turn one party out and put another party in, or else men still more base and more wicked were in a conspiracy to entrap innocent men and stab their reputations and their influence for all time to come. Let us have the clearest and fullest possible investigation. The well-being of the people of this Province is at stake and if ever even justice ought to be administered without fear, favor, or partiality, it is in connection with this particular case.

As an indication of the progress of public sentiment in the Dominion in favour of prohibition in connection with the drink traffic the following facts may be made mention of, which are certainly very significant:

In the entire Province of Prince Edward Island the Scott Act has been adopted by large majorities. There are three counties and the city of Charlottetown. A retail liquor license has not been issued in that province for years. As an evidence that the workings of the Act have been such as to meet the reasonable approval of the people, it may be stated that an attempt was made to repeal the Act in Prince County a few months ago, and it was sustained by a larger majority than at first. There have been five votes taken in Prince Edward Island and in every instance the majority in favor of local prohibition has been large.

In Nova Scotia there are eighteen counties and in twelve of these the Act has already been adopted. The majorities in its favour were larger than the majorities usually are at other popular elections in the Mayflower Province. It looks as though the Act would soon be adopted in the entire Province. An amendment has just been made to the Act by the Dominion Parliament which will make it more efficient in Nova Scotia and will also hasten its general adoption. The popular feeling there now is evidently in favour of its adoption and its thorough enforcement.

In New Brunswick there are fourteen counties and in nine of these the Act has been adopted. In most cases the vote in its favour was two to one, and in some instances considerably more than that.

In no instance has there been a majority against its adoption. There are also in the Province the cities of St. John, and Fredericton, the Provincial capital. In St. John a vote was taken which resulted in a tie, and the Act was not therefore legally adopted. Probably another vote will be taken there as soon as the time comes round when it can be again legally submitted. In Fredericton the first vote on the adoption of the Act in the Dominion was taken and it was carried. At the expiration of three years an attempt was made by its opponents to have it repeated and another vote was taken, which resulted in a verdict again in its favour. The verdict of the people of New Brunswick in favour of the adoption of the Act is of much significance in connection with the Prohibition question. They are next door neighbours to the people of Maine, where the prohibitory law has been in force for more than thirty years. If the law had been a failure in Maine, as some persons are anxious for us to believe, our fellow citizens in New Brunswick would have been well aware of the fact, and surely they would have avoided the adoption of a similar law, under the circumstances. The facts, however, are that all the counties in that Province adjoining Maine were among the first to adopt the Act, and that, too, by decisive majorities.

In Ontario there has been a good deal more hesitation about moving for the adoption of the Act, probably much in consequence of the failure of the Dunkin Act, years ago. It is now becoming evident, however, that the Scott Act is a much more efficient restrictive law, and the movement is becoming general. The Act has been in force for a couple of years in Halton County, and its original promoters declare themselves satisfied with its working. It was carried a few weeks ago in Oxford County by a majority of nearly 800. In Welland County it was defeated by a considerable majority and so it was in the city of Hamilton and in the County of Wentworth. In Lambton County two votes have been taken. In the first instance the majority was in its favor, but the vote was declared void because of a legal technicality. In the second vote it was defeated, owing a good deal to the fact that many became somewhat discouraged in consequence of the previous failure.

In the Province of Manitoba votes have been taken in two Counties and majorities were recorded in its favor. There appear to be peculiar difficulties in the way of immediate progress there, and it is not probable that further steps will be soon taken in regard to the measure.

In the great North West Territory prohibition prevails. The Act of the Dominion Parliament giving a constitution to

that Territory provided for prohibition and it has been fully as well enforced as any other law in the Territory. There is the testimony of its advantages from such eye witnesses as Lord Lorne, Dr. Grant of Queen's University, and other eminent men, who are not themselves prohibitionists. Surely great success has attended the efforts of the prohibitionists during the past few years.

It is now rumoured that the English and the American Governments are to unite in common cause and concerted action against dynamite conspiracies and assassins. This is as it should be. Governments should ever freely unite in stamping out any movement tending to unnecessary disturbance of peace and safety and malicious destruction of life and property. It has been very discreditable to the American authorities that for years and years a class of base and brutal men have been allowed to go on with impunity in their open boast of organizations expressly designed to destroy the public property and endanger the lives of the people of a friendly country, as well as to collect large sums of money for that express purpose. In few other friendly countries would anything so dangerous and so disgraceful have been so long permitted.

Every year more and more young women from intelligent and refined circles must earn their own living. That is the condition of the time, which can not be gainsaid. Two concessions on their part are equally necessary to their material success and peace of mind. One is that they shall be willing to step outside the overcrowded ranks of teachers, of whatever sort, of incompetent authors and decorative artists, of copyists, saleswomen, or clerks, and courageously accept some vocation where there is still room, or find a new place for themselves. The other is that they shall abandon the foolish notion that they can be happy only in one way or under one set of conditions, when there are fifty other ways in which they may be happy, or at least steadfast and cheerful.

The question of wages makes no appeal to sentiment. It is simply one of demand and supply. The shop shop worker gets twenty-five cents a day, because thousands of women can do her work as well as she. The accomplished needle woman, going out by the day to fit and sew, gets three dollars and her meals, because the demand for her kind of work is greater than the amount obtainable. Intelligent household service is even rarer, and commands proportionately better wages. Neither tears nor rhetoric nor pangs of suffering can change this state of things. Only the resolve of women to do the work that pays best, however hard and hateful, and to do it as men do theirs, without complaint and without condescension, will avail.