

The Camp Fire.

A. MONTHLY JOURNAL

OF TEMPERANCE PROGRESS.

SPECIALLY DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF
THE PROHIBITION CAUSE.

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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, MARCH, 1897.

THE PLEBISCITE.

The Dominion Parliament is summoned to meet for the transaction of business on the 25th inst. According to the promise made by the Hon. Mr. Laurier, it is anticipated that the bill providing for the taking of a plebiscite on prohibition, will be one of the measures to be enacted.

We are thus almost certain that in a few weeks we shall know definitely the time, form and conditions under which will be taken this long expected vote. As there can be no reason for bringing forward the measure earlier than needful, the Premier's promise may be taken as a practical announcement that the plebiscite will be held during the present year.

A few weeks more therefore, will see the inauguration of a campaign on which depends more in relation to the prohibition cause than has depended upon any political action yet taken in the Dominion. Once more we appeal to the friends of the temperance cause to lose no time in perfecting organization, getting ready for detail of preparation and being fully ready for the advance when the signal is given.

PUBLIC OPINION.

If a majority of electors, in the coming plebiscite, declare in favor of prohibition, it will be the duty of the Government to propose, and of Parliament to enact, a law prohibiting the manufacture, importation and sale of intoxicating beverages. Legislation must keep pace with the sentiment of the people.

While desirous to emphasize the soundness of the position just stated, we desire at the same time to call the attention of our friends to the important fact that to make prohibition a success will require something more than a mere majority of votes. Law is the expression of the people, and law will be strong only if the will of the people is strong. There are doubtless voters friendly to temperance who will make a little effort for the cause that is involved in marking a ballot in its favor, but who will not give themselves the trouble of any effort or personal sacrifice to secure the actual enactment and enforcement of a prohibitory law.

To day there is much favor for the prohibition movement that does not rise to the height of self-denying enthusiasm. We must strive not merely to obtain a true record of public opinion, but to strengthen, develop, and educate that opinion so that it will be an impelling conviction that neither Legislatures nor law-breakers will dare to defy.

The plebiscite campaign opens to us a magnificent opportunity for the work that needs to be done. People will read and listen and think about prohi-

bition as never before. We must bend every effort to the task of laying before them at this critical time, the unassailable facts and arguments which make those fully possessed of them, absolute enthusiasts in the working out of this great reform. Let us not miss the opportunity.

PROVINCIAL LEGISLATION.

The Provinces whose Legislatures have already commenced their 1897 session, are grappling with the question of liquor law reform. The Legislatures that have not yet convened will have to face the question. This must be a year of important advance along this line.

The Privy Council decision has been rendered, and there is no excuse for further delay. In a number of provinces the people have by plebiscites expressed their opinion and legislators need have no doubts relating thereto. The way is clear. We must take advantage of the opportunity.

There will probably be disappointments, but we must not therefore be discouraged. The men who are dealing to-day with our requests will shortly be dealing with us, requesting in their turn our aid to re-elect them. We must let them understand that their requests will be considered in the light of their past actions, not simply in view of election promises.

The people who have declared for total prohibition must be taken as seriously desiring all the prohibition they can get. Restrictive legislation is prohibition in a degree. Where the people have voted for prohibition, it is the business of legislators to enact all the prohibition that their ascertained jurisdiction will permit them to enact. We must insist upon this position, it being definitely understood, that legislatures which fall short of their whole duty this session, must face the question again at the next session, and that not till then have grappled with it as far as they can, will there be any relaxation in our insisting upon relief from the fearful curse from which it is their duty to believe us.

LOCAL OPTION.

The Dominion Parliament has duties and powers in relation to the liquor traffic. Provincial Legislatures have powers and duties relating to the liquor traffic. The electors in every locality have also powers and duties of the same kind.

In nearly every part of the Dominion there is vested in the people in some form, the power to absolutely suppress the retail liquor traffic. This local prohibition will not be as effective as a broader measure. It is however, good in itself, and may be one of the best methods of ensuring the attainment of more useful legislation.

There is no question as to the value of local prohibition. In thousands of places it has proved itself a benediction. It has saved thousands of homes from the curse of intemperance, and has been one of the most effective agencies in strengthening and developing prohibition sentiment among the people.

If it is wrong for the Dominion Parliament to fail of its full duty, if we blame Legislatures for stopping short of the full exercise of their powers, it must be admitted that still heavier personal responsibility rests upon the individual prohibitionist who, representing simply his own unqualified conviction and not the differing opinions of others, fails to do all in his power to carry that conviction to its logical conclusion. A professed prohibitionist who will not do all in his power to secure local prohibition is badly informed, or lacking in judgment, or insincere.

The directness with which men face the prohibition question in a local cam-

paign is one of the greatest advantages of this system. We owe much of the prohibition sentiment of Canada to-day to the educating influence of Dunkin Bill and Scott Act and other Local Option campaigns. In such contests we prove our sincerity, we strengthen public opinion, we make prohibition votes and we cripple the liquor traffic. Let us see to it that no such opportunity is missed.

PROHIBITION IN MAINE.

Thousands of columns of newspapers and thousands of pages of books have been written demonstrating the effectiveness of the prohibitory law in reducing intemperance in Maine. Much literature has also been made up devoted to efforts to prove that the law is not a success. Without dealing at the present time with these sometimes conflicting statements, we desire to call the attention of our readers to a piece of evidence that consists of undisputed facts, the conclusion from which is irresistibly forcible.

The residents of Maine who have had forty years' experience of the working of the law ought to be well qualified to judge of its value. It is not going too far to say that the public opinion of the state unhesitatingly endorses the law and that there would be no hope of an attempt to secure its repeal. In the year 1884 a popular vote was taken upon the question of making prohibition not merely statutory but constitutional. To the electorate was submitted a proposal to embody the principle in the fundamental law of the state. The vote of the prohibitory amendment stood as follows:—

For	70,783
Against	23,811

Majority for prohibition 46,972

In the year 1895 the advocates of license secured the introduction into the state legislature of a bill for re-submitting this question of constitutional prohibition to the people. A strong campaign was made in its favor but the proposition was defeated in the legislature by a vote of 114 to 13.

PROHIBITION IN KANSAS.

The Royal Commission on the Liquor Traffic wrote to the Governor of Kansas asking him for information relating to the working of the prohibitory law in the State. The Governor, Hon. D. Lewelling in reply forwarded to the Commissioners an interesting pamphlet entitled "Prohibition in Kansas, Facts not Opinions" stating that he believed it "covers most of the points required" in the letter from the Commission.

A document of so much importance, or at least some of its most striking paragraphs, ought to have been presented among the evidence reported by the Commission. We are left however, to the minority report for information as to the real nature of the contents of this instructive pamphlet.

The limits of our space will not allow us to make extensive quotations from it. We desire at this time simply to call attention to a couple of forcible paragraphs, and an endorsement of the book signed by a large number of those who were prominent state officials when it was published. The book says:—

The law is effectually and sufficiently enforced. The direct results of its enforcement are plain and unmistakable. We believe that not one-tenth of the amount of liquor is now used that was used before the adoption of the prohibition law.

Our citizens fully realize the happy results of the prohibition of the manufacture and sale of liquor, as these results are seen in the decrease of poverty and wretchedness and crime, and in the promotion of domestic peace and social order—in the advancement of general enterprise and thrift. In our opinion the prohibition law is now stronger with the people than it was

when adopted. It has more than met the expectations of its warmest friends. It is steadily winning the confidence and support of thousands who were its bitterest enemies.

The endorsement mentioned is in the following form:—

We have examined the statement prepared by the president and secretary, and the ex-president and ex-secretary of the Kansas State Temperance Union, upon the subject of prohibition and its results in our state. We find it a fair, honest and true statement of our condition, and we heartily endorse it as such.

“LYMAN U. HUMPHREY, Governor,
“WILLIAM HIGGINS, Sec. of State,
“TIMOTHY MCCARTHY, Auditor of State,
“J. W. HAMILTON, Treasurer of State,
“G. W. WINANS, Supt. Public Instruction,
“L. B. KELLOGG, Attorney General,
“ALBERT H. HORTON, Chief Justice,
“D. M. VALENTINE, Associate Justice,
“W. A. JOHNSON, Associate Justice.”

ALL FROM RUM.

One beautiful afternoon in August, there came to me the heartbroken wife of a State prison convict. We tried to plan for his pardon and restoration to home and the world. It was a very sad case. He was the only surviving son of a very noble man; one who lived only to serve the poor, the tempted, and the criminal. All he had, all he was, he gave unreservedly to help thieves and drunkards. His house was their home his name their bail to save them from prison; his reward their reformation.

Bred under such a roof, the son started in life with a generous heart, noble dreams, and high purpose. Ten years of prosperity, fairly earned by energy, industry, and character, ended in bankruptcy, as is so often the case in our risky and changing trade; then came a struggle for business, for bread—temptation, despair, intemperance. He could not safely pass the open doors that tempted him to indulgence, forgetfulness, and crime. How hard his wife wrought and struggled to save him from indulgence, and then to shield him from exposure! How long wife, sister and friends labored to avert conviction and the State prison! "I would spare him gladly," wrote the prosecuting attorney, "if he would stop drinking. He shall never go to prison if he will be a sober man. But this wretchedness and crime comes from rum."

Manfully did the young man struggle to resist the appetite. Again and again did he promise, and keep his promise a month, then fall. He could not walk the streets and earn his bread soberly while so many open doors—opened by men who sought to coin gold out of their neighbors' vices—lured him to indulgence. So, rightfully, the State pressed on, and he went to prison. An honored man disgraced, a loving home broken up, a wide circle of kindred sorely pained, a worthy, well-meaning man wrecked. Sorrow and crime—"all comes of rum," says the keen-sighted lawyer.

As I parted from the sad wife on my door-step, I looked beyond, and close by the laughing sea stood a handsome cottage. The grounds were laid out expensively and with great taste. Over the broad piazza hung lazily an Eastern hammock, while all around were richly-painted chairs and lounges of every easy and tempting form. Overhead were quaint vases of beautiful flowers, and the delicious lawn was bordered with them. On the lawn itself gayly dressed women laughed merrily over croquet, and noisy children played near. A span of superb horses pawed the earth impatiently at the gate, while gay salutations passed between the croquet players and the fashionable equipages that rolled by. It was a comfortable home as well as a luxurious one. Nature, taste, and wealth had done their best. It was a scene of beauty, comfort, taste, luxury, and wealth. All came from rum. The owner was one who, in a great city, coined his gold out of the vices of his fellow-men.

To me it was a dissolving view. I lost sight of the gay women, the frolicsome children, the impatient horses, and the ocean rolling up to the lawn. I saw instead, the pale convict in his cell, twelve feet by nine; and the sad wife going from judge to attorney, from court to governor's council, begging mercy for her over-tempted husband. I heard above the children's noise, the croquet, the laugh, and the surf waves, that lawyer's stern reason for exacting the full penalty of the law: "All this comes from rum."—Wendell Phillips.