

The Camp Fire.

A MONTHLY JOURNAL
OF TEMPERANCE PROGRESS.

SPECIALLY DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF
THE PROHIBITION CAUSE.

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ADDRESS - TORONTO, ONT.

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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, JULY, 1898

READY.

The splendid Conventions held in Toronto on July 5th and 6th may be taken as the formal commencement of the Dominion Prohibition Plebiscite campaign.

Previous to that time much organization had been effected, many plans had been laid, large quantities of literature had been circulated. The Conventions however, gave a new impetus to work, definitely endorsed what had already been done, and declared the lines upon which the battle must be fought.

Not the least interesting part of the proceedings was the great mass meeting held on the evening of July 5th, addressed by representatives from four provinces, all of whom spoke confidently of the brightness of the outlook in their respective localities. The speech of Hon. G. W. Ross was full of forcible arguments, furnishing a splendid model for other campaigners. The reports of the Executive Committees were full of encouragement and told of an immense amount of work done that must be productive of far reaching results.

The contest is now fairly on. It is confidently anticipated that voting will take place in about three months. There is no time to lose. The central organization is ready. Every locality should be immediately organized. Anyone who wants advice or assistance should forthwith correspond with the Executive Officer of his provincial organization. The list is as follows:

Nova Scotia.—W. J. Sanders, Halifax. *New Brunswick.*—Rev. Geo. W. Fisher, Fairville. *Prince Edward Island.*—J. E. Matthews, Charlottetown. *Quebec.*—J. H. Carson, Montreal. *Ontario.*—F. S. Spence, Toronto. *Manitoba.*—Rev. J. M. A. Spence, Winnipeg. *British Columbia.*—Rev. J. C. Speer, Victoria.

PROHIBITION IN NORWAY.

Bitter attacks are being made by the liquor favoring press upon Norwegian prohibition. An attempt is made to show that since the Parliament has given the people the privilege of local prohibition, drunkenness has increased, and that lately the votes of the people have shown less favor for prohibition.

Some of the facts of the case are generally suppressed, and statistics are quoted that in themselves might lead to wrong conclusions unless fairly explained. As a matter of fact Norway was at one time an exceedingly drunken country. Legislation was enacted

prohibiting the unregulated distillation and sale of spirits, and providing for the establishment of the Company System. Under this legislation a great many distilleries were suppressed. The Company System was adopted in many places. Convictions for drunkenness fell off greatly.

In 1801 an Act was passed authorizing a general vote as to whether the Company System should be in force in different localities, or should be replaced by prohibition. In 1806 eighteen towns voted, fourteen of them declaring for prohibition. In 1807 fifteen towns voted and ten of them declared for prohibition. In 1808 already eleven towns have voted and seven have gone for prohibition. None of the towns that voted for prohibition have gone back to the Company System. In fact they cannot go back for five years.

The law which provided for this voting, also enjoined the police authorities to arrest every apparently intoxicated person. Accordingly offenders of this kind are now much more strictly dealt with. Arrests for drunkenness are therefore increased. There have been increases in towns that voted prohibition, and also great increases in towns which remain under the Company System. It is argued that failure of prohibition is shown by fewer towns voting for prohibition recently, and an increase in the number of arrests. Fewer towns have voted because there are fewer to vote. Arrests have increased because the police are more vigilant.

It must be borne in mind that neither the local prohibition of Norway nor the Company System, interferes with the free sale of fermented liquor containing under twenty-two per cent of alcohol. This liquor, with the change in law enforcement, sufficiently accounts for the drunkenness that is reported. Temperance people are simply agitating for local option power to prohibit other forms of liquor as well as ardent spirits. They have not changed their views. They have not reversed their action.

PRESBYTERIANS SOLID.

The vagaries of Rev. Dr. Grant, of Kingston, on the prohibition question, were aired again in the Presbyterian Church General Assembly on June 14th. His hostility to prohibition, which has won so much applause in liquor circles, found strong expression when the report of the committee on church life and work was presented. The resolutions to which Rev. Dr. Grant took objection and endeavored to amend were in the following terms:—

5. "This Assembly desires to renew deliverances of past years on the subject of temperance, declaring the general traffic in intoxicating drink to be contrary to the word of God and to the spirit of the Christian religion, that total legal prohibition is the true goal of all efficient temperance legislation, and that the church of Christ can make no compromise with a traffic that is in such deadly antagonism to all human happiness, all social virtues, and all religious life.

6. "That in view of the approaching plebiscite the recommendation of last Assembly be renewed, namely:—That our people are hereby earnestly exhorted to use their utmost endeavors in every lawful way to carry the plebiscite in favor of prohibition, by an overwhelming majority, and thus free the church from one of its deadliest foes, our land from untold misery and crime, and our modern civilization from its direst reproach and shame."

No. 6 he proposed to change so as to make it simply exhort electors to "vote on the question submitted to them intelligently and conscientiously."

He evidently hoped by the substitution of this phrase to get some votes in favor of eliminating the forcible appeal which the committee report proposed. In favor of the change he only secured nine votes, the original report being endorsed with overwhelming enthusiasm.

It is to be hoped that the deliverance of the General Assembly logical and forcible as it is, will carry conviction wherever it is read, and that the evils which it so strongly denounces will have arrayed against them an enlightened public sentiment in favor of the legislative remedy so emphatically approved.

LITERATURE.

Over five million pages of literature have now been issued by the Dominion Alliance Literature Committee. More is being prepared as rapidly as possible. The demand is great.

This is very gratifying. There are however, many localities that have yet done nothing to avail themselves of the splendid opportunities open to them in this respect. They are earnestly requested to write at once to the Secretary of the Dominion Alliance in Toronto for full information.

There are now ready twenty-four splendid campaign documents, which are furnished friends of our cause for free distribution at prices far below the cost of production. We must work for victory in the coming campaign by fairly carpeting our Dominion with prohibition literature.

A MOTHER'S DELUSION.

A New York physician related the following facts:

A few weeks ago he was called to the help of a man who had been mortally wounded in one of the low dance halls or "dives" of the city. When he had attended to his patient, the doctor looked curiously about him. The wounded man lay before the bar, against which lounged some ragged old sots. In the next room a few young men, flushed and bright-eyed, were playing cards, while the gaudily dressed barmaids carried about the liquor.

But neither the gamblers nor the women nor the drunkards paid any attention to the dying man on the floor. They squabbled and laughed, deaf to his groans. The proprietor of the dive, a burly fellow who had been a prize fighter in his younger days, having seen the police secure the murderer, had gone back quietly to his work of mixing drinks. Death apparently had no interest or terror for these people.

Suddenly a little old woman, with white hair, a thin shawl drawn about her, came to the street door. Her appearance produced a startling effect.

The besotted old men at the bar put down their glasses and looked at her uneasily, the card players hastily shut the door to keep out the sight of her, and the barmaids huddled together in silence, but the change in the brutal landlord was most striking. He arose hastily and came up to her, an expression of something like terror on his face.

"Is James here?" she asked gently.

"No, no, he is not here. I do not know where he is!" he said hurriedly. She looked about bewildered. "I was sure he was here. If he comes, will you tell him his mother wants him, sir?"

"Yes, yes." The man urged her out of the door. The physician soon followed, and saw her going into another dive and grog shop along the street.

"Who is she?" he asked of a policeman outside. "Is she in no danger. The man shook his head significantly.

"They'll not hurt her, sir. They've done their worst to her. She is the widow of a clergyman and she had one son, a boy of sixteen years. They lived happy and comfortable enough till he took to going to pool rooms, and then to theatres, and at last to the dives here.

"He was killed in one of them in a fight three months ago in that very one you were in just now, and was carried home to her, bloated from drink and covered with blood, and dead.

"She's known nothing since. She only remembers that he came to these houses, and goes about among them searching for him every day.

"They're afraid to see her. They think she brings a curse on them. But they won't harm her. They've done their worst to her."

This is a true story. How many sons of loving mothers are going down like this boy into these dark places to-day?—*Fourth's Companion.*

SPARE THE CHILDREN'S FEET.

A ragged woman was crossing the corner of a public park in London, where the children of the poor are accustomed to play, many of them bare-footed. A burly policeman stationed at the corner watched the woman suspiciously. Half-way across, she stopped and picked up something which she hid in her apron. In a instance the policeman was by her side. With gruff voice and threatening manner, he demanded:

"What are you carrying off in your apron?"

The woman seemed embarrassed, and refused to answer. Thereupon the officer of the law, thinking she had doubtless picked up a pocketbook, which she was trying to make away with, threatened to arrest her unless she told him at once what she had in her apron.

At this the woman reluctantly unfolded her apron, and disclosed a handful of broken glass.

In stupid wonderment the policeman asked:

"What do you want with that stuff?"

A flush passed over the woman's face, then she answered simply:

"If you please, sir, I just thought I'd like to take it out of the way of the children's feet."

Blessings on the kind-hearted old woman who was so thoughtful of the children's needs and children's feet. Would we imitate so good an example, let us take out of the path of the little ones anything that can wound them, injure them or cause them to stumble, and nothing can injure them more or cause them to stumble so certainly as drink.—*N. T. Advocate.*

A TRAMP'S ELOQUENT LECTURE.

A tramp asked for a free drink in a liquor saloon, the request was granted, and when he was in the act of drinking the proffered beverage, one of the young men present exclaimed: "Stop, make us a speech. It is a poor liquor that doesn't unloosen a man's tongue." The tramp hastily swallowed down the drink, and, as the liquor stirred his blood, he straightened himself and stood before them with a grace and dignity that all his rags and dirt could not obscure.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I look tonight at you, and it seems to me I look upon the picture of my lost manhood. This bloated face was once as young and handsome as yours. This shambling figure once walked as proudly as yours. I once had a home and friends and position. I had a wife as beautiful as an artist's dream, but I dropped the priceless pearl of her honor and respect in the wine cup, and Cleopatra like, saw it dissolve, and quaffed it down in the brimming draught. I had children as sweet and lovely as the flowers of spring, but saw them fade and die under the blighting curse of a drunkard father. I had a home where love lit the flame upon the altar and ministered before it, but I put out the holy fire, and darkness and desolation reigned in its stead. I had aspirations and ambitions that soared as high as the morning star, but I broke and bruised their beautiful wings, and at last strangled them that I might not be tortured with their cries any more. Today I am a husband without a wife, a father without a child, a tramp with no home to call his own, a man in whom every good impulse is dead, and all swallowed up in the maelstrom of drink."

The tramp ceased speaking, the glass fell from his nerveless fingers and shivered into fragments on the floor. The swinging doors pushed open and shut again, and when the little group about the bar looked up the tramp was gone.—*Michigan Christian Advocate.*