

# THE CAMP FIRE

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## A Prohibitory Law FOR CANADA, BY PROVINCES.

Toronto, May, 1899.

The Executive Committee of the Dominion Alliance again appeals earnestly and confidently to the friends of prohibition to consistently carry on still further the noble work they have been pushing with so much zeal and effect. This they can do by giving all possible aid and support to our friends in Parliament in their effort to carry out the plan described in the following Report which was adopted by a large meeting of our Legislation Committee, composed mainly of Members of Parliament favorable to prohibition.

### Report on Plan of Action.

"That this Committee re-affirms that total, national prohibition of the manufacture, importation and sale of intoxicating liquors for beverage purposes, is the only right and effective remedy for the evils of intemperance, and must be steadily pressed for until attained.

"That in view of the refusal of the Government to accept the Plebiscite as a sufficient mandate for a national prohibitory law, and the fact that with one exception every province and territory has recorded a substantial vote and a large majority in favor of such legislation, your Committee—while urging prohibitionists to maintain their agitation for total prohibition—believes that at the present time the temperance reform would be materially aided by the enactment of legislation upon the lines herein-after set out, namely:—

"(1) An Act totally prohibiting the manufacture, importation and sale of intoxicating liquor for beverage purposes in any province adopting or bringing into force such an Act by a vote of the duly qualified electors.

"(2) Voting upon the question of the bringing of such legislation into force in any province to be at the time of the holding of a general federal election, in order to save expense and secure the largest possible vote upon the question.

"(3) Such legislation, when adopted by any province, to be unrepealable for a period of time long enough to ensure a fair test of its effectiveness.

"That a committee be appointed to take steps to secure the introduction into Parliament at the earliest possible date of a Bill to carry out the foregoing suggestions, the committee to have power to vary the methods suggested as may appear best to secure the results aimed at."

### Only an Instalment

The Alliance Executive regret that no more comprehensive action than that proposed is at present open for their support. They will not accept as a settlement of the liquor question anything short of Total National Prohibition. Nothing else can be fully satisfactory. Nothing less is final. The new proposal though far ahead of anything yet attained, will only be taken as an instalment. Whether or not it is secured, the agitation must go on for a still better law, and for what is now more needful than ever, the election to Parliament of men who will fairly voice the demand of the nation for the suppression of the liquor traffic.

### The Government Should Have Acted.

The prohibitionists of Canada claimed and claim, that the substantial majority for prohibition recorded in the Plebiscite throughout the Dominion, including the splendid majority of 107,948 in that part of Canada outside Quebec, ought to have been sufficient to warrant the Government in introducing into Parliament such legislation as would fairly embody the will of the people thus expressed, and they were deeply disappointed and dissatisfied when informed that the Government had refused to take such action.

### The Committee's Position.

When the Legislation Committee met at Ottawa, they had to deal with the situation in view of this refusal, which they found to be endorsed by many Members of Parliament. The recorded vote of the Province of Quebec, namely 28,582 for prohibition, and 122,614 against, and the fact that this great vote against prohibition had peculiar features, such as being mainly polled in one large area of the country, and by the electors of one special national origin, were advanced as reasons against interfering with existing conditions in that province. The committee had to decide upon a

course of action, knowing that the Government had a strong majority in the House of Commons, and being convinced that Parliament would not enact a prohibitory law to take effect in the Province of Quebec

### The Only Course Open.

There is much force in the argument that Quebec, being a part of the Dominion, ought to loyally accept the decision of a majority of all the voting electors, and that prohibition would be a benefit to that province. We have however, to deal now with the facts that, in the opinion of our friends, Parliament could not be induced to enact a law of national prohibition, and that at present we can only secure prohibitory legislation for the other parts of the Dominion.

### Substantial Progress.

The legislation proposed in the report of the Committee, will be a long step in advance. It will enable each province to secure prohibition of a more thorough and effective kind than could be enacted by a Provincial Legislature.

It was suggested that Parliament might be asked to enact such legislation directly, without any further voting. In reply to this it was claimed that Parliament would not accept even the great majority polled for Dominion prohibition in different provinces, as evidence that the people of those provinces would support a narrower measure.

It was also argued that the right of Parliament to enact special legislation for a part of the Dominion, is not as clear as the right to enact a law for the whole Dominion, to come into force in any locality after an affirmative vote of that locality, which principle is already recognized in the Canada Temperance Act.

For similar reasons it was thought that the end aimed at might be most readily attained by alteration and extension of the C. T. Act, removing its defects and making it a strong comprehensive and effective measure, applicable to a whole province or territory. The sub-committee appointed, will, however, carefully plan out all details, with a determination to have the new law as thorough going and as workable as it can be made.

The further voting proposed will be, not like the Plebiscites already taken, a mere expression of opinion, but actual law-making action, bringing prohibition into force by a majority vote in any province. Voting should be at next general election without any preceding petition.

The proposal to vote at the time of a general election, and to have no repeal voting before the law has had a fair opportunity, are good. Penalties and provisions for enforcement must also be strong, definite and simple.

### An Appeal.

Men and women of Canada! who have so loyally, unselfishly and patiently striven to redeem our land from the awful curse of intemperance, and whose work under God's blessing has been crowned with so much success, we appeal to you again! Another opportunity has come to us. If we are true to it we make Canada a safer place for the weak and tempted, and secure for our people greater comfort and prosperity than they have yet known. We may obtain a law that will make many a home happier, lift heavy burdens from many sorrowing hearts and destroy the now lawful temptation that if it continues will degrade and destroy those you love and cherish. We may win speedy blessing and success, and make another advance towards the hoped for time when the terrible drink evil will be utterly overthrown.

### What to Do.

There is no time to spare. Let everyone who sees this circular take action, and urge every friend to take action, to help this important movement. Secure resolutions endorsing it from meetings and societies. Have these resolutions published. Write to Members of Parliament urging them to support the legislation proposed. Write your approval of the plan to your local newspaper. Send the Alliance Secretary any suggestions or advice you can offer. WORK! NOW! "for God and Home and Canada."

On behalf of the Alliance Executive.

F. S. SPENCE,  
Secretary.

J. J. MACLAREN,  
Chairman.