

The Camp Fire.

A MONTHLY JOURNAL
OF TEMPERANCE PROGRESS.

SPECIALLY DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF
THE PROHIBITION CAUSE.

Edited by F. S. SPENCE

ADDRESS - - TORONTO, ONT.

Subscription, TWENTY-FIVE CENTS a Year.

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, JUNE, 1897.

THE TRAIL OF THE SERPENT.

On May 28th a drunken man entered a store in the town of Oakman, Ala. He quarrelled with some of those present and commenced firing with a revolver. The Mayor of the town was in the store at the time and was shot dead. A clerk in the place is badly wounded and will die. Another man who was present is in the same condition, and a fourth is badly wounded. A man near, seeing a rifle convenient, at once shot the drunken murderer.

Press dispatches of the same day as that from which we take the above, report a number of other terrible fatalities. Hardly a day passes without its record of some awful catastrophe directly attributed to intoxication. The police courts of every city and of nearly every town in Canada, are daily testimonies to the awful social and moral ruin that is being wrought by a traffic that is solemnly, systematically authorized by law.

In civilized communities Governments are supposed to exist at the instance and for the benefit of those who are governed. The ruling power is constituted by the sovereign people, who have given to certain individuals authority to govern, solely for the protection and well-being of the people. No parliament, legislature or cabinet has any right to perform any other function than this, which of course incidentally includes the right to provide the means of bearing the expense of government. No governing body has any right to exercise its power for the establishment, or maintenance of any institution that is not a public benefit.

So-called Christian governments however, are emulating Turkish barbarism which sends its minions to slay the innocent and helpless. Our rulers, for revenue, authorize the continuance of a traffic that is more heartless, cruel, degrading and destructive than any fanatical Moslem. Christian homes are daily invaded by terrorism and danger as grave as those that curse the subjects of any heathen despot. The principles of legislation that we profess to believe in are utterly disregarded, and we are coolly told that a grave impediment to the abolition of this infernal system of legalized brutality is that the system pays revenue and saves the people from some other form of taxation.

If the Government of some other country perpetrated upon a few resident Canadian citizens a title of the outrage that the liquor traffic perpetrates in Canada this country would rise in indignation, demanding that the Government should take steps to stop the atrocity, no matter what expense the task would involve, even though

many lives should be sacrificed in the effort. The Government would not hesitate to raise duties, levy war taxes, in some way would collect from the people any expense that might be necessary in the case. The question of revenue would not be allowed for a moment to stand in the way of the nation's determination to see that the rights of every citizen were respected.

Why is it there is a different sentiment and a different course towards the evil that exists in our own country? Is it because the Christian people of Canada have grown apathetic toward a long tolerated wrong? Is it that they are blinded to its enormity by the legal sanction that it enjoys? Is it that the wealth of the liquor traffic buys its immunity for its enormities? Is it that the wily traffic is shrewd enough to dexterously manipulate the machinery of politics, accomplishing its desired ends while good people simply talk about what they would like to have done? Is it that too many church members tamper themselves with the evil thing, and fear to inconsistently denounce what in sheer self-indulgence they encourage? Whatever be the cause, we have to face the stern fact that the liquor traffic rules, and the right sentiment of the community has as yet failed to effectively assail its strongholds in legal enactment, social prominence and political power.

A political party can readily raise a mighty campaign fund to ensure its success. Money is rapidly subscribed to build and endow churches, hospitals and other philanthropic institutions. It is a weary task to gather funds with which to equip a crusade for the deliverance of our country from the awful tyranny of rum domination.

Is it not time that some special effort should be made to stir the apathetic Canadian conscience to the realities of the situation? Is it not time that we should cease to talk about our proud position as a moral community and make some effort to purge our political system of this foul and degrading blot? Is it not time that we should make it the special business of the Christian sentiment of Canada to sacrifice some minor matters if need be, and unite in earnest to annihilate the legalized liquor traffic?

PLEBISCITE PROSPECTS.

On May 13th the Government at Ottawa was waited upon by a strong deputation representing different sections of the liquor business, and headed by Mr. James Haverson and Mr. E. Dickey, solicitor and secretary respectively of the Ontario License Holders' Protective Association. The deputation disavowed any intention of opposing the taking of a plebiscite, but strongly urged that the people should not be asked to express their views on the question of prohibition simply. They wanted the Government to declare that prohibition would make direct taxation necessary, and to ask the people if they were willing to have prohibition accompanied by direct taxation. An argument was also submitted in favor of compensation for the liquor business in case of the enactment of prohibition. It was also strongly urged that prohibitory legislation should not be enacted unless fifty per cent of the electors on the voters' lists were found to be in favor of it.

Replying to the deputation, Hon. Mr. Laurier said that there is some dispute as to whether or not the country is ripe for prohibition, and that the Government thought it right that those concerned should have an opportunity of expressing their views upon the matter. It was the duty of

the Government to solve difficulties, and one of the difficulties with which they had to deal was the question then under consideration. He believed that direct taxation would be necessary to replace the revenue lost by the enactment of prohibition, it being the policy of the Government to restrict rather than increase customs duties. He believed that earnest prohibitionists were ready for this emergency and would vote accordingly if the question were submitted to them. The question of compensation he did not consider of immediate consequence. It would have to be considered by Parliament. He was not prepared to say that one-half of the vote or more or less should be considered conclusive. He only wished to say that prohibition ought to be backed by a very strong public opinion. If the people declared their unmistakable desire for prohibitory law it would be the duty of the Government to obey the people.

Sir Richard Cartwright endorsed the statements made by the Premier and said that the bill when brought down would be certain to give satisfaction to moderate men on both sides.

At the time of writing this, the plebiscite bill has not yet been introduced and it is difficult to say whether or not it will be passed during the present session.

THE COMING CONVENTIONS

This year in which the British Empire celebrates Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, will be one of special importance in the history of moral reform in the Dominion of Canada. It is the organization year for the plebiscite campaign. It will see the inauguration, if not the close, of the campaign in which the people of Canada will decide whether prohibition is to be immediately enacted or indefinitely postponed.

These facts will cause special interest to centre round the great prohibition gatherings to be held in Toronto on July 13th, 14th and 15th. On the first named date Ontario prohibitionists will gather in force in their annual convention. There will undoubtedly be a great rally of workers. Throughout the province there is impatience and dissatisfaction with the failure of the Ontario Legislature at its last session to make a definite advance. The legislation that was enacted has in it very little of relief from the oppression of the liquor traffic, and even that little is postponed as the bill actually passes does not come into operation until the first of July. This practically authorizes the continuance for another year of abuses that the measure might have had some effect against. Then there is the work of plebiscite preparation to be taken up. The big fight ahead will demand and receive a large measure of attention.

The Council of the Dominion Alliance will be convened on the afternoon of the 14th. Present appearances are that the representation from out-lying provinces will be better and fuller than ever before. It will be a council of war. Plans will be discussed for the harmonizing of all interests and the securing of wise, aggressive action in every part of the Dominion. Already a number of delegates have been appointed.

Arrangements have been made to carry delegates to and from the conventions on the same plan as last year, this is, both ways for a single fare, provided three hundred delegates purchase tickets. It is pretty certain that several times that number will be on hand.

The great International Epworth League Convention opens on the 15th. Many of the delegates to that body

will no doubt come a few days earlier to take part in the prohibition gatherings. Everything bids fair to make these great prohibition conventions a strong demonstration of Canadian sentiment against the liquor traffic and an effective council of deliberation towards practical results.

THE OCTOBER MEETINGS.

Canadian W.C.T.U. workers have taken hold early of their preparations for the great Dominion and World's Conventions to be held in Toronto, October 20th to 26th. They are meeting with cordial co-operation from sister organizations, from churches and from public officials. Their interest and enthusiasm are growing stronger as the time draws nearer. They will doubtless have Conventions worthy of their efforts.

The Woman's Journal, of Ottawa, the Dominion W.C.T.U. official organ, outlines the proceedings and names a number of world-famous workers who will be present to assist in the great meetings. We have not space to even mention their names. The musical committee have engaged the services of an expert vocalist to lead the singing. A feature will be a chorus of three hundred specially trained children. Sessions will be held in the Horticultural Pavilion which the Toronto City Council has granted free. Mass meetings will be held in Massey Music Hall which has a seating capacity of nearly 5,000. Tickets are already issued for a complimentary banquet to the famous visitors who will be on hand.

An active committee of experienced ladies has charge of local arrangements and will be pleased to give information to any inquirers. The Chairman is Miss Lottie Wiggins, 29 Metcalf St., Toronto, and the Secretary, Mrs. M. M. Brownell, 33 St. Mary St., Toronto.

THE SALOON.

If I knew that beside a path where my wife had to pass alone, a ruffian waited, in the darkness, to assault her, I would kill him as I would a mad dog, and if some smooth and politic Pharisee should come, in order to prevent a breach of the peace, and offer me money from the villain for a chance at the woman I love, I would put my foot upon him as I would upon any other reptile.

The saloon is an assault upon the happiness of every wife, the innocence of every girl, the light of every home, the honor of every man; and if that is true, the Republican and Democratic parties are organized insult to every loving husband in the land. And while I live and have a voice to speak withal, whenever and wherever any candidate or party server, ecclesiastical or lay, says the saloon is logically no issue, tho' it be my last word, I'll call him "liar." And while in every canvas the Democrat says it isn't worth while, and the Republican says it's a thing to trade on, I'll walk the highways of my native land, until the grave earth stops my mouth, and cry, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.—John G. Wooley.

DOMINION W. C. T. U.
LITERATURE DEPOSITORY,
56 ELM STREET, - TORONTO.

A large and well assorted stock of leaflets on hand, for use of temperance workers and members of W. C. T. Unions. Temperance literature for distribution in Sunday Schools, on Juvenile Work, Sabbath Observance, Systematic Giving, etc., etc., always in stock. Orders by mail promptly attended to. MRS. BASCOM,
Manager.

Ripans Tabules.
Ripans Tabules cure nausea.
Ripans Tabules: at druggists.
Ripans Tabules cure dizziness.