

## The Camp Fire.

A MONTHLY JOURNAL  
OF TEMPERANCE PROGRESS.

SPECIALY 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, 1896.

### PROHIBITION CANDIDATES.

Never before in the history of Canada was the temperance question forced upon the attention of Parliamentary candidates to the same extent as it is in the present campaign. From every part of the country we hear of candidates being pledged to support prohibition.

Friends of our cause have acted wisely in this respect. They ought to take advantage of this opportunity. By judicious management there may be secured representatives favourable to our cause, from a good majority of the constituencies. The immediate future of the prohibition question is now in the hands of the temperance electors and upon their wisdom and energy will depend the action of the Parliament to be returned on the 23rd inst.

### THE PLEBISCITE PROPOSAL.

The Quebec Branch of the Dominion Alliance at a meeting held in the City of Montreal, laid down in reference to parliamentary candidates, a policy which deserves careful consideration.

The ground taken by the Convention may be briefly summarized as follows:

1. In the coming campaign prohibitionists should support only candidates who are known, avowed and reliable prohibitionists, wherever such candidates are in the field.

2. Where neither candidate comes up to the standard, and both are otherwise equally desirable, the preference should be given to the Liberal candidate, in view of the fact that the Liberal Party is pledged to take a plebiscite of the Dominion electorate on the question of prohibition and to promote prohibition legislation if such a plebiscite should show a majority for prohibition.

It must be admitted that if we had no hope of securing a prohibitory law from the Dominion Parliament, it would be wise to accept the plebiscite proposition coupled with such promises of legislation as have been made by the Liberal Leaders.

The Temperance cause will however, be best served at the present time by electors paying more attention to candidates than to parties.

The Conservative Party is not committed to opposition of a plebiscite. Hon. G. E. Foster has been one of the strongest plebiscite advocates. Many other leading Conservatives have supported his views. A plebiscite taken with the approval of both parties in Parliament would be better for us than

a plebiscite to which one party was opposed.

Our friends will then in our opinion, act wisely by supporting candidates pledged to support prohibition regardless of mere party exigencies. Where such candidates cannot be secured then they will help the cause by supporting, regardless of parties, candidates pledged to take a plebiscite and enact prohibition if the plebiscite will warrant their doing so.

It will be well also to pledge even prohibition candidates to support the taking of a plebiscite in case they fail to secure the direct enactment of a prohibitory law.

### THE PRIVY COUNCIL DECISION.

The full text of the decision of the Imperial Privy Council has been made public and it is to be regretted that direct replies have not been given to all of the questions submitted.

The judgment has unhesitatingly and clearly affirmed the authority of the Ontario Local Option Law, and by implication has declared the right of every provincial legislature to give electors the right of locally outlawing the liquor traffic.

To the ordinary reader the argument submitted in the support of this decision conveys the impression that the Judges believed the local legislatures to have full power to prohibit any liquor trafficking that begins and ends within the territorial jurisdiction of such legislatures. The only reservation seems to be that such legislation would be superseded by a prohibitory law enacted by the Dominion Parliament.

Their Lordships, the Judges, who gave this decision, have however, taken care to state that they do not render a definite judgment upon any question except that of local option, which came before them in the concrete form of law, they declining to give replies having the force of judgments to any of the other questions dealt with.

Some lawyers consider that the argument presented in vindication of local option would not also necessarily establish the legality of a provincial prohibition law if such a law were enacted.

No formal interpretation of the decision has however, been made by the Ontario Government. Upon that Government now devolves the duty of interpreting the decision and declaring what action will be taken in reference to it. This will have to be done, in view of Sir Oliver Mowat's pledge to introduce into the Ontario Legislature a prohibitory law if the decision would warrant his doing so.

We shall, therefore in all probability have within a few weeks, an interpretation of the Privy Council judgment, by one of the best constitutional lawyers in the British Empire, with the interpretation accompanied by a definite statement as to what action the Ontario Legislature will be invited to take in view of that decision.

### LOCAL OPTION.

Every friend of the temperance cause will be delighted with the fact that the Privy Council judgment emphatically upholds the validity of the Ontario Local Option Law.

There is now open before us a splendid field for immediate and effective activity. Local option campaigns will wipe out the liquor traffic in scores of localities and at the same time will bring on agitation and discussion that must have a beneficial educative effect.

By different forms of local option, the liquor traffic has been entirely legalized in the Province of Prince Edward Island. By local option the

traffic is limited to two counties in Nova Scotia. By local option the greater part of New Brunswick is under prohibitory law. Nearly four hundred parishes in Quebec are free from the liquor traffic. In Manitoba prohibition by-laws cover many municipalities.

Everywhere that it has been fairly tried, local option has proved its worth as a weapon that the liquor traffic dreads. The Privy Council has just declared that the electors of Ontario are competent to wield that weapon.

Earnestly we appeal to our friends to study the situation, to avail themselves of the present opportunity to bring on campaigns for the enactment of local option by-laws in every municipality in which there is a likelihood of such campaigns meeting with success.

### THE PARLIAMENTARY BAR.

A good deal of discussion has taken place over the question of liquor selling within the precincts of the Parliament Buildings at Ottawa. This was provoked by unseemly occurrences in the House of Commons, where some members appeared in a decidedly discreditable condition. The matter was much canvassed and the offence strongly condemned in many quarters. On the other hand members of Parliament made strong statements as to the general sobriety and good conduct of the House. These disclaimers however, did not affect the stated facts.

Whether or not the sale of liquor in the Parliament Buildings is to be credited with the unseemly conduct of a few members, it will readily be admitted that a public bar in the Parliament Buildings is neither desirable or defensible. Unfortunately, we understand the liquor selling is carried on without a regular license from the Provincial authorities. It is in some way supposed to be under the sanction of the House of Commons, but the House of Commons should not encourage liquor selling without the legal sanction that it requires elsewhere.

A simple solution of the whole difficulty is the total abolition of liquor selling in the Parliament Buildings. There ought to be no difficulty about this. There are many strong friends of temperance in Parliament. They should take action at the earliest possible moment to terminate an offensive and discredited institution in defence of which little can be said. Our friends in the constituencies will do wisely by taking advantage of the present election campaign to pledge parliamentary candidates to the abolition of parliamentary liquor selling. Every candidate should be pledged to support action in this direction.

### THE BRITISH ROYAL COMMISSION.

The Royal Commission appointed by the Imperial Government to investigate the liquor question has commenced its operations. Its first session was held on Tuesday, May 12th, in the old Palace Yard, London. By express commission of Her Majesty future sessions will be held in the Queen's Robing Room in the House of Lords. Strong committees representing the temperance societies and the liquor traffic respectively, have been organized and have employed prominent counsel to advocate their respective views before the Commission. The temperance committee is known as the Central Evidence Board. The members of the Royal Commission are: Viscount Peel (the late Speaker), the Earl of Jersey, Viscount de Vespi, the Bishop of London, Sir Algernon Edward West, Sir W. H. Houldsworth, M.P., Sir Frederick Seager Hunt, M.P., Sir

Charles Cameron, the Rev. Hercules Henry Dickinson, Messrs. W. Allen, M.P., W. S. Crane, Alex. Morison, Gordon, W. Graham, Henry Grinling, Samuel Hyslop, Andrew Johnston, John Hy. Roberts M.P., Henry Riley Smith, Charles Walker, John Lloyd Wharton, T. P. Whittaker, M.P., Alfred M. Wingrain, M.P., Samuel Young M.P., and George Younge.

### ALCOHOL AND THE STOMACH.

As soon as alcohol in any of the intoxicating drinks (or in any form) is received into the stomach it commences its destructive work. One of its effects is upon the gastric juice which is secreted from the lining membrane of this organ, nature's greatest agency in the process of digestion. It at once seizes upon that secretion and separates or precipitates from it one of its most important constituents, pepsine, without which digestion is a failure. So that process is retarded, impaired or partially or completely suspended until the alcohol passes out of the stomach, by absorption or otherwise, and a new secretion of gastric juice takes place, or until the juices of the stomach redissolve the precipitated pepsine. So we come at once upon the stubborn fact that while alcohol will dissolve many of the resins, gums, etc., under no circumstances will it dissolve, or digest food, but it is a preserver of them.

When we desire to prevent a tumor, a bone, a portion of a limb, large or small, removed by the surgeon, we always preserve it in alcohol. Snakes, lizards, etc., are preserved and kept for ages in the same manner.

Why do we use alcohol? Simply because it will prevent decomposition and will not digest. That's all. And yet how many are stupid and ignorant enough to sip beer, wine, stout, or brandy while partaking of a meal.

I suppose that is their theory for food "sticking by the rib." Yes, it does stay with them a good deal longer for it.

The continued use of alcoholics, as beer for instance, causes the stomach to gradually become weakened and lose much of its tonicity. That atony causes loss of appetite, and the organ fails to wake up to its duty by indicating its desire for food until it has a little stimulating assistance in the old way, as it has become so accustomed to depend upon it. So a person in that condition contracts the belief that he must have an alcoholic for an appetizer, while another, equally imbecile, thinks he must have it as a digestive. And yet if either one should find his house on fire he would not throw on kerosene oil to extinguish the flames, though it would be just as rational an application as alcohol in the former instance. Dr. Hammond has clearly demonstrated through experimental investigation that alcohol taken with food produces injurious effect akin to the excessive use of food. One writer says, "Its use is qualitative abuse as gluttony is quantitative intemperance."

The same writer says, "The testimony of two million total abstainers in England shows that health is improved by disuse of such poisonous liquids." The one drinking alcoholics at meal time as above indicated is using the means to produce very different results from those he anticipates. By the irritation of the drink upon the stomach, which he deludedly calls appetite, he often eats an undue quantity, weakens the walls of the stomach, and causes digestion to become a laborious process.

Oh man, that thou couldst see thyself.—Dr. Mann, in the *International Good Templar*.

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