

and particularly the counsel and sympathy of your Secretary, whose words of cheer have done much to nerve my arm for the conflict.

POLITICAL ACTION.

Among the principles afforded us by Christian legislation are these: "society has a right to protect itself in everything that would promote good order, its safety, its prosperity, and its existence; society should not undertake to regulate evil by law, but to remove it; and society has a right to prevent or remove evil by destroying private property, or rendering it valueless if necessary." With these principles before us, the righteousness and constitutionality of a Prohibitory Liquor Law is quite apparent. Already the liquor traffic has assumed a political aspect, not because of the agitation of temperance organizations, but because the friends of intemperance have legalized the traffic in strong drink, for so long as men are licensed to make and sell intoxicating beverages the evil of intemperance is entrenched by political action and political power, and cannot be met as a purely moral question any more than honest men could cure theft by moral suasion if stealing was made legal. Temperance men, generally, feel that the only hope for success is in prohibitory legislation, and politicians are beginning to admit our right to withdraw legal protection from the Traffic. We do not propose to legislate men moral or sober, but we do claim that the shield of the law be removed from the body-killing, soul-destroying traffic, that we may strike it with moral weapons; we do hold that no government has a right to protect any thing that is injurious to the morals, wealth, peace, happiness or prosperity of the subject, or that is contrary to the word of God. We wish to raise no political party cry, but bring every government of whatever stripe in politics to admit and act upon the principle of prohibiting what is morally, physically or politically wrong. At your last session a platform was adopted which is "briefly summed up as *Total Abstinence* from using or giving; *No License* for the sale or disposal; and *Legal Suppression* of the manufacture and importation of all kinds of intoxicating drinks as a beverage." This commits us to the principles of Prohibition, and year after year this body, as well as the different Grand Lodges, have defined it as a Templar's duty to vote the temperance ticket, yet there is not that living political power in connection with the Order that success to our principles requires. I have long felt that there was need of consolidating the temperance political power of the country, and particularly of our Order, for while the work of moral suasion is being carried on, and the seeds of total abstinence are being sowed, there is not a husbanding for legal prohibition; therefore, I offer for your consideration the advisability of establishing, in connection with our Order, a separate degree or department for members of the full age of 21 years, who have been tried in our ranks, and will take a life-long pledge, whose main duty shall be the obtaining and enforcing Prohibitory Legislation.

I cannot close this section of my report without referring to the powerful influences in favor of prohibitory legislation brought to bear upon the last Ontario Legislature and Dominion Parliament through the influence of the Ontario and Quebec Prohibitory Leagues, in conjunction with the Temperance Orders in these Provinces, and I trust our sisters on the sea-board will form Leagues and join with us in the west in petitioning the Government at Ottawa for Prohibition. Never was the country so ripe for such legislation. Let us all unite in one importunate prayer that will not cease until our petition is granted.