

THE CAMP FIRE.

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Every one who receives this paper is respectfully requested to read every part of it carefully. It is a journal that no Canadian temperance worker can afford to be without. The subscription price is almost insignificant. In the present campaign for prohibition legislation in Ontario it will be of intense interest and great value.

ELECTORAL ACTION.

We strongly urge our friends to carefully consider and promptly act upon the prohibition Manifesto that has been issued by the Alliance.

Too much importance cannot be placed upon the important duty of immediate electoral action to secure the return of a legislature that will represent the public opinion of Ontario better than did the legislature whose term of office has just expired.

In the the coming campaign, strenuous efforts will be made to convince the people that the government policy on the liquor question is right and not antagonistic to the true interests of the temperance cause. The voting requirement precedent to the bringing into operation of prohibition has in it a plausibility that is better evidence of the skittishness than of the good faith of its authors. It may by clever presentation be made to appear attainable and prudent.

Our workers must not be misled. The Ontario Liquor Law is a well-framed and effective act. The conditions on which it may be brought into operation are undoubtedly favorable to the liquor party and exceedingly difficult for prohibitionists to attain. The prohibitory law with the unfair referendum attachment may fairly be said to be legislation in the liquor interest.

The requirement of votes to be polled is unreasonable. The time of voting is not the time that is convenient and desirable. The measure as it stands is not a fulfilment of the Government's pledges. Had the Referendum Act been amended as Mr. Marter proposed, it would have been a practicable measure of attainable prohibition. Those who voted for Mr. Marter's amendments are therefore definitely ranged in favor of reasonable temperance legislation, and those who opposed him are ranged as voting for conditions favorable to the liquor traffic.

Mr. Marter's action has given us an issue which must settle the matter of whether a candidate is or is not satisfactory to prohibitionists as far as the temperance question is concerned. Prohibitionists have a right to support Mr. Marter and have a right to support any good candidate who will take Mr. Marter's position, as against any of the Liberal or Conservative members who

opposed the Marter amendments of the legislature.

Every candidate nominated ought to be definitely placed. Prohibitionists ought to know who are friends and who are foes of the cause they advocate. There may be cases in which both candidates will commit themselves to stand by prohibition in the legislature. Only in such cases are prohibitionists free to follow their party preferences. Where one candidate is with us our duty is clear and imperative. Where no party candidate can be relied upon, the duty of independent action, if at all practicable, is equally clear.

The only representative we can rely upon is the man who, like Mr. Marter, will refuse to accept party dictation on the prohibition question. Our cause can only win through the election of men who in this matter will be "independents" if their party organization opposes the effective legislation which the people have endorsed and which is "the only right legislative remedy" for the drink evil.

THE MANITOBA VOTE.

The result of the voting in Manitoba on April 2nd, was what might have been expected from the peculiar condition of affairs in that province.

The Manitoba Liquor Act was passed in 1900 to come into operation on June 1st, 1901. The question of the constitutionality of the measure was submitted to the courts and, this question not being settled when the provincial legislature met in 1901, that body passed an Act providing that the coming into operation of the law should be deferred to a date to be fixed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council. The general expectation and the understanding was that the government would bring the Act into operation if it were declared valid by the Privy Council.

In November last the Privy Council rendered the final judgment declaring the Liquor Act within the power of the provincial legislature, and prohibitionists confidently expected to have the measure put into operation during the present year. Instead of doing this the Manitoba Government adopted the policy of submitting to a popular vote the question of bringing the Act into force. The legislature approved this policy and the result was "The Referendum Act, 1902" which provided that a vote should be taken on the question. "Are you in favor of bringing the Liquor Act into force on the first day of June 1902?"

The Referendum Act further provided that the Lieutenant Governor in Council should issue an order bringing the Liquor Act into force if this Act should be approved by forty-five per cent. of the electors entitled to vote on the question, or sixty per cent. of those voting if sixty per cent. of all entitled voted, or sixty-two and a half per cent. of those voting.

A very largely attended provincial Convention of prohibitionists called by the Manitoba Branch of the Dominion Alliance, denounced the proposed referendum and called upon prohibitionists to ignore it and refuse to

vote on the question. The Alliance policy was to stay away from the polls at the time of the referendum and to unite in electoral action to defeat at next general election the government that failed to put the liquor law into operation.

Later on some prohibition workers who were dissatisfied with the action of the Convention formed an organization called the Manitoba Prohibitory League, and urged the electors to go to the polls and do their best to poll a sufficient vote to bring the Liquor Act into operation. Prohibitionists were thus divided into two parties, one party campaigning to induce prohibition voters to stay at home, and the other party urging them to vote.

There is little doubt that prohibition sentiment in Manitoba is strong enough to have met the requirements of the Referendum Act. The prohibitionists could have polled sufficient votes to have met the conditions required for the issue of the proclamation bringing the Liquor Act into force. The Alliance, however, took the ground that enforcement of the law could not be expected from a government so hostile to prohibition as the present one, and that the cause of prohibition would be best served by the election of a legislature committed to the policy of enacting a law without any further popular voting upon the question. The League favored action to bring prohibition immediately into operation.

The liquor traffic took advantage of the division of temperance workers, to win a nominal victory at the polls. Immense quantities of anti prohibition literature were circulated. A well planned and vigorous anti prohibition campaign was carried on. Money was freely used wherever it could be made effective. While temperance workers disputed whether it was wiser to vote for prohibition or abstain from voting altogether, the united liquor party appealed to all classes to vote against the Liquor Act.

The result, as might have been expected, was a nominal victory for the liquor party. The Alliance did not succeed in inducing prohibitionists as a body to stay at home, the League did not succeed in inducing the prohibitionists as a body to go to the polls. No doubt some of the arguments used in favor of abstention from voting for prohibition told also in favor of the vote against prohibition. So far as reported the liquor party seemed to have polled about 19,000 votes and the prohibitionists about 13,000.

In the plebiscites of 1891 and 1898 the prohibitionists polled very great majorities and no doubt would have achieved a similar result had they been united in the recent campaign. The figures of the recent vote will be sent all over the world and will convey the impression that there has been a great turn-over in public opinion. The explanation will not go with the figures, and the real opinion of Manitoba will be badly misrepresented.

For the next two years liquor favoring politicians in Manitoba will claim that the people are opposed to prohibition,

and they may go as far as to remove the prohibitory law from the statute books altogether. The bringing into operation of prohibition will be indefinitely postponed, the prohibitionists will be divided and weakened on account of their recent dispute.

The situation however, will be changed if, as the Alliance workers expect, they can unite the temperance men of Manitoba to overthrow the government at the next election, making the prohibition question a definite issue at the polls.

The Manitoba incident has in it much of instruction for Ontario prohibitionists in the present crisis. It makes manifest the wisdom of the unanimous decision of the conference that resolved to do all that can be done to secure a prohibition victory in the Ontario referendum on December 4th.

A CANTEN AVOCATE

There will be a great deal of indignation over the recently published annual report of Major General O'Grady Haley, General Officer commanding the Canadian Militia in which he goes out of his way to advocate beer canteens at the annual militia camps.

Some of the highest British military authorities are unhesitating in their condemnation of the supplying or intoxicating liquor to soldiers. The United States Congress has put legislation prohibiting beer canteens into the most definite and effective form and a campaign to secure its repeal has signally failed.

The action of Major General O'Grady Haley will meet with universal condemnation throughout the Dominion of Canada in which temperance is stronger than in any other civilized country. The sale of intoxicating liquor of any kind at military camps is now illegal and the only change that Canadian sentiment will tolerate is a change in the direction of a more rigid enforcement of the regulations making it so.

The imprudent recommendation of Major General O'Grady Haley in favor of the establishment of drinking facilities at Canadian Military Camps is found on pages 31 and 32 of his Annual Report for the year 1901 and is in the following terms:—

"I would not on any account permit the sale of spirits in the canteens during annual drill, but I must here most strongly protest against a system that forces a soldier, if he needs a glass of beer to resort to the saloons and drinking shops of the nearest town where there is no control over either the quality, nature, or quantity of the liquor supplied him. The effect of this regulation is to largely increase the amount of drunkenness in camp, and it is to easy to show why this is so.

"In a military canteen all liquor has to be consumed on the premises and, if proper supervision is exercised, no man should be served with more than is good for him. But what happens under the existing system of prohibition? The man who would have been contented with his glass of ale or beer had he been able to procure it in camp, has to walk some distance to get his drink, probably takes whiskey instead of malt liquor, and very often returns to camp with a bottle of bad whiskey under his coat, which he takes to his tent, and proceeds to make his comrades intoxicated."