

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, DECEMBER, 1898

GOOD MEN AND POLITICS.

A great deal is said and written regretfully relating to the improper practices and the demoralizing tendencies that are so manifest in political affairs. Suggestions of remedial measures are plentiful. Some writers think that advantage would result from changes in our political system, while others urge severer penalties for detected improper practices. Before suggesting a remedy for the evil it might be wise to attempt to discover its cause.

This cause is mainly the neglect of politics by good men, the shirking of personal responsibility in relation to public affairs on the part of those who ought to be most interested in good Government. Society suffers because men otherwise honorable and conscientious ignore the responsibilities and duties of citizenship, leaving the management of political affairs to a great extent to the sordid and self-seeking elements of the community.

High-principled and conscientious men think that it pays them better from a financial point of view to attend to their private business than to give attention to public affairs. Men of another kind find that they can make more money by questionable political manipulations than they can make in honest business. The selfishness of the professed Christian and the selfishness of the unscrupulous schemer are unitedly the cause of the whole trouble.

If good men would go into politics they could speedily control the affairs of our municipalities, provinces and the Dominion. In nearly any electoral constituency in the Dominion of Canada, fifty good men could make it impossible for any bad man to be elected. Whatever there is to be deplored in the low standard of politics, in the corruption that election courts reveal, in the mismanagement that frequently characterizes public affairs, is really chargeable to the neglect of those good men who accept and enjoy all the benefits of organized civilization and shirk its duties and responsibilities.

To those who are willing to make a real sacrifice of personal convenience for the sake of principle, who are willing to submit to some personal discomfort in order to benefit their fellows, there is no field of work easier of access or likely to yield a larger crop of public benefit, than the political field now too much neglected by those who ought to be its most energetic cultivators.

LAW ENFORCEMENT.

Since the Plebiscite there have been many speeches made and articles written asserting that the majority recorded in favor of prohibition is not such as to ensure the successful enforcement of a prohibitory law. The theory is advanced that such a law would be successful if a majority of the electors on the voter's lists were sufficiently interested to mark their ballots in its favor, but that otherwise its enforcement would be defective.

As a matter of fact the effectiveness of liquor laws depends not upon public opinion (which after all is simply private opinion) so much as upon official intention. Even where public opinion is overwhelmingly in favor of license law, the people do practically nothing to help officials to enforce that law. In such cases the usefulness of the law depends entirely upon the integrity and energy of the officials.

Let us suppose that in a community which has adopted a prohibitory law, there are a dozen men who seek to sell liquor in defiance of that law. They will succeed or fail in proportion as the officials who are charged with the enforcement of the law do their duty. The success of the dozen law-breakers will not be affected by the size of the majority which adopted the law. Under the Scott Act, in cases where great majorities were recorded for prohibition, the officials did not receive any more assistance from private parties than in places where there was a bare majority for prohibition.

Of course in a community in which no person drank liquor there would be no liquor sold, yet one can imagine such a community so indifferent as to record a very small vote for prohibition.

People who will not take the trouble to vote against prohibition, are not likely to be active in opposing its enforcement. Given a majority of the votes polled favorable to prohibition, honest officials willing to do their duty, and we have all that ought to be required, or that is needed, to make prohibition successful.

A LESSON.

In the war between the United States and Spain the deaths from wounds in battle were comparatively few, while the deaths from sickness contracted in camp were very many. One of the saddest features of the campaign was the drunkenness prevalent among the soldiers in some localities as the result of drinking facilities provided by the military authorities. All over the United States strong protests have been made against the canteen system, and it is safe to say that whiskey killed more American soldiers than did the bullets of the Spanish.

The magnificent victories won by British and Egyptian troops in the Soudan were the work of an army of total abstainers. No intoxicants were allowed among the soldiers. The health and spirits of the men were exceptionally good. On their return to civilization, drink-induced disease played sad havoc with the splendid army that had successfully resisted the hardships of a severe campaign.

It has been announced that liquor is to be prohibited in the territory which has now been nominally placed under Egyptian Government as the result of Lord Kitchener's campaign. This is done in the interests of the physical, moral and material welfare of soldiers and natives. The world is coming to see the terrible danger of the liquor traffic and to recognize the wisdom and righteousness of prohibitory law.

LITERATURE CIRCULATION.

It is frequently said that the recent Plebiscite campaign did more to develop prohibition sentiment than had been done during many previous years. This was largely because the friends of temperance utilized the opportunity to flood the country with judicious literature. Men read, and thought and grew. It was made evident that literature circulation is more and more becoming the most effective political agency of the day.

This good work should not now be discontinued until another crisis is upon us. The education should go on always. If all religious and temperance bodies would unite to make the year 1899 a year of education by literature circulation, they would place the prohibition cause in a position of strength such as it has never occupied before.

One of the most effective kinds of literature, because the most attractive and most generally read, is the periodical. We have plenty of splendid material of this kind in Canada. *The Northern Messenger*, *The Onward*, *The Forward*, *The Templar Advocate*, *The Woman's Journal*, *The Manitoba Good Templar*, and *THE CAMP FIRE* are among the periodicals largely devoted to temperance education. Each has its specialty. All are good. Earnestly we recommend our friends to consider carefully the wisdom of securing and distributing in their respective neighborhoods, all through the coming year, the most effective kind of prohibition periodical literature. They may thus do a work the magnitude and usefulness of which it is hardly possible to overestimate.

UNION.

The project, often discussed, of a union of existing temperance organizations in Canada is again receiving attention. We have Sons of Temperance, Good Templars and Royal Templars, all doing similar work in a similar way. Men and women belong to one or other of these organizations just as most convenient. In some cases temperance workers belong to all of them. The result is a multiplicity of meetings and a division of energies.

Time is wasted with initiations and rituals of different organizations. Expense is incurred for meetings in separate halls, for printing, for separate Grand bodies and organizing agents, that too often compete instead of co-operating. The advantages of union are manifest and great.

As far as the Dominion of Canada is concerned the Sons of Temperance is the oldest body. The Good Templar Order is the most numerous. The Royal Templar Order is perhaps the most aggressive, and holds its members more permanently because of its beneficiary plan. All are doing good work, but doing it with an expenditure of money, time and effort that would be economized, and therefore made to produce much better results, if there were only one organization instead of three.

To the union movement then we wish hearty success. It is a step in the right direction. No doubt difficulties will occur in dealing with any amalgamation proposition but none of these difficulties are insurmountable, and if approached in the right way the result will be certainly a great gain for the temperance cause.

IMPORTANT.

TORONTO, 1898.

DEAR FRIEND,—

You are respectfully requested to carefully examine **The Camp Fire**, a neat four-page monthly Prohibition paper, full of bright, pointed, convenient facts and arguments; containing also a valuable summary of the latest news about our cause. It is just what is needed to **inspire workers and make votes.**

The victory won last month was only the opening of a campaign in which the liquor traffic will do its utmost to block, delay, and if possible prevent our securing the enactment and enforcement of prohibitory law. We have plenty of hard fighting ahead of us. We must keep posted and equipped, knowing all that is being done by our friends and foes, and sophistry and misrepresentation that will be advanced.

The Camp Fire will be one of the best aids you can have in the struggle. It will contain nothing but what you need. Every number ought to be preserved. You cannot afford to be without it, and the subscription price is only nominal, **Twenty-five cents per year.**

While a necessity to every prohibition worker **The Camp Fire** will also be of special value for distribution. Literature won the plebiscite victory. We must keep up the educating work. Printed matter tells. It does its work continuously, silently, fearlessly and No form of literature is so generally read and so potential as the up-to-date periodical. It comes with the force and interest of newness and life. For this reason the form of a monthly journal has been selected.

This journal will be in every respect reliable and readable. Every article will be short, good and forcible, containing nothing sectional, sectarian or partizan. The literature of the old world and the new world will be ramsacked for the most helpful and effective material. The price is very low.

Such literature will convince many a man whom his neighbors cannot convince. It will talk to him quietly, in his own home, in his leisure moments, when he can listen uninterruptedly, when he cannot talk back and when the personality of the talker cannot interfere with the effect of the talk.

It will ply him with facts, arguments and appeals, that will influence, instruct and benefit him. It will set him thinking. This is half the battle. Its wide circulation will swell the victory that we are about to win. This is its object.

Your help is asked in this great work. *Every society* should subscribe for and distribute hundreds of copies. This is the easiest and surest plan of making prohibition votes. Look at the terms:

Twenty copies will be sent to any one address every month for six months, for ONE DOLLAR, payable in advance.

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