

The Camp Fire.

A MONTHLY JOURNAL
OF TEMPERANCE PROGRESS.

SPECIALLY DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF
THE PROHIBITION CAUSE.

Edited by F. S. SPENCE

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NOTE.—It is proposed to make "THE CAMP FIRE" 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, APRIL, 1895.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT.

The Vanguard for 1893-4, in neat cloth binding, is now for sale. It is the most important Canadian contribution yet made to the literature of the temperance and prohibition reform, containing over 650 pages full of invaluable arguments, facts and statistics, all reliable, fresh and good, fully and carefully indexed. No worker can afford to be without it. The price is only ONE DOLLAR. The number of copies is limited. Send your order at once to the Editor,

F. S. SPENCE,

51 Confederation Life Building.

THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

The Canadian Royal Commission on the Liquor Traffic has completed its labors. It is expected that the report will be laid before Parliament at the approaching session. A number of bulky volumes of evidence are already printed. Probably no document since the compilation of Domesday book has been of equal magnitude. The expense to the country will be enormous.

The findings of the commissioners are still secret. However, from the manner in which the inquiry was conducted, it may be assumed that the report will be adverse to prohibition, as the majority of the commissioners manifested in all their work a most unreasonable prejudice against everything and every person that seemed unfavorable to the liquor traffic. The impression left everywhere was that these gentlemen were acting the part of advocates rather than judges. The general verdict of those, who were present at the inquiry in different localities, is that the whole affair was a gigantic farce.

It remains to be seen what Parliament will do with a report of such a character, prepared in such a way, and from commissioners with such a record.

ANOTHER INQUIRY.

For many years prohibition workers in the United States have been making special efforts to induce Congress to appoint a commission of inquiry into the liquor traffic. They succeeded at the recent session to the extent that the following amendment, proposed by Senator Lodge of Massachusetts was added to the Legislative, Executive and Judicial Appropriation Bill:—

"The Commissioner of Labor is hereby authorized to make an investigation relating to the economic aspects of the liquor problem, and to report the results thereof to Congress: Provided, however, that such investigation shall be carried out under the regular appropriations made for the Department of Labor."

Dr. Carroll H. Wright, the commissioner who is to carry out this instruction is recognized everywhere as a conscientious, able and painstaking official. He will no doubt with his regular staff, present a report that will be of very much value.

Perhaps the lack of an appropriation will not be an unmixed evil. Our Canadian Royal Commission seems to have had funds unlimited at its disposal. The result has been a report so enormous in dimensions that in all probability no human being will ever read it. Had the commission been managed with less money, more fairness and less effort to bolster up the liquor traffic which it was appointed to report upon, the report would probably have been smaller and more useful.

Whatever is done by Dr. Wright is pretty certain to be thoroughly, carefully and impartially done.

SUMMER WORK.

The summer season is at hand. The interval between daylight and bedtime will soon be short. The weather will be pleasant out-of-doors. It will be harder than it was in the winter to make temperance meetings interesting, and to have them well attended.

What are our lodges, divisions, councils, unions and other organizations to do in the warm weather? Their work must not be given up. If it were ground would be lost. The liquor traffic takes no holidays. Neither should the temperance cause.

It will be wisdom to make the changed conditions help us instead of hindering us in our work. Can we? Yes! every temperance society should have its outdoor rally. You can get with a little effort a bigger crowd in a pleasant grove than you could ever gather into a church or hall.

Get up a pic-nic. Begin planning and working for it now. Get good speakers for it and good music and other attractions. The work of preparation will arouse the interest of your members, and bring them out to your regular meetings. In such a gathering you will reach many you could never get at in any other way.

Do not lose any time. Let your committee be appointed early. There will then be time for the full preparation necessary to complete success. We ought to have a regular campaign of temperance pic-nics in the summer of 1895.

THE COMING CONVENTION.

It is fully expected that the appeal to the Imperial Privy Council relating to the question of provincial jurisdiction will be heard in June of the present year. The final settlement of this long disputed question is therefore close at hand.

We are near the opening of another campaign. If provinces are declared to have prohibitory power, a demand will at once be made for the exercise of that power. If it is declared that Provincial Legislatures cannot prohibit then there will be made a demand for the exercise to the full of the restrictive power which such Legislative Assemblies possess. In any case an advance will be made.

There is no dispute as to the authority of the Dominion Parliament. That body has prohibitive power. Now that the Royal Commission farce is ended, and no more excuse for delay,

there must be a louder call than ever for national prohibition.

All these facts will add to the interest of the convention shortly to be held. They will bring out a large attendance. It will be a general representative gathering. Every religious and temperance organization will be enlisted to send delegates.

The date of the convention will be announced immediately after the decision of the Privy Council. Our friends will act wisely in getting ready in time. We ought to have a grand union of all workers in an earnest demand for immediate effective legislation to the full extent to which our legislators have power to go.

TROUBLE IN MANITOBA.

On Monday the 8th, inst., judgment was given by the Court of the Queen's Bench in Manitoba, quashing certain local option by-laws on the ground that the legislation authorizing the adoption of such by-laws was ultra vires of the Manitoba Legislature.

There are probably three-fourths of the municipalities of Manitoba, in which no licenses are issued. In some of them the prohibition is because of the law requiring every petition in favor of a license to be signed by fourteen out of the twenty householders nearest to the premises proposed to be licensed. Such a law is prohibitive where temperance sentiment is strong and the evil nature of the liquor traffic fully recognized. In some municipalities the people have by direct vote, under provincial legislation, adopted by-laws prohibiting the sale of liquor.

It is the prohibition secured by the latter method that is interfered with by the decision referred to. The quashing of the by-laws will not however, authorize liquor selling. Parties desiring to sell intoxicants must still comply with the petition provision, and prohibition will no doubt prevail to a great extent in the localities where local option by-laws were operative.

The decision is not final. It is simply a following up of the declaration by the Supreme Court of Canada that Provincial Legislatures have not prohibitory power. That decision may be reversed by the Privy Council, in which case the Manitoba decision will no doubt be reversed by a higher court.

The cause has really received no set back. A technicality has been thrown in the way of workers in certain localities. The cause cannot be blocked by such seeming impediments. We are on the road to total national prohibition, and with God's blessing will get there, notwithstanding temporary delays.

EDUCATING WORK.

The National Temperance Advocate of New York, referring to some recent phases of the fight with the drink evil, says, "The trouble is that too many expect to reap a harvest of prohibitory laws before the seed-sowing of total abstinence and of public conviction on the part of the people that the traffic is the evil which we have to fight."

There is force in the statement. We should not slacken any effort for prohibitory legislation, we must use continually all the public sentiment that is developed, but we will do wisely to bear in mind the warning not to slight the other lines of work.

We are reaping to-day, in prohibitory enactments and an advanced public opinion, the fruit of the earnest seed-sowing of faithful workers who inculcated total abstinence in the days gone by. The harvest would be greater if the seed sowing had been more complete. To-day we must sow

as well as reap, otherwise we shall have disappointment in years to come.

Let us keep up the total abstinence campaign. Let temperance organizations work with increasing energy. Let pulpit, platform, and press be utilized at every opportunity.

We would like to emphasize the importance in this connection of literature circulation. The printed page is one of the most powerful of educating agencies. The land should be sown broadcast with sound prohibition literature, and with such information and appeal as will extend the principles and practice of total abstinence from every form of intoxicating liquor.

CIRCULATE LITERATURE.

Ever since the art of printing became a factor in our civilization, the power of the press has been recognized. The printed page has been a mighty agency for evil and for good.

Greater and greater however, is becoming the power of this agency. More and more is the printing press a lever to lift men up or a load to bear them down. The world's development could not be what it is without the help of this wonder-working force. Political campaigns are won, business enterprises are built up, the people are so influenced, by it, that it might almost be truthfully said that the printing press rules the realm.

Prohibition literature will be perhaps the mightiest weapon in the deadly conflict that is close at hand. By it the people must be taught the nature and extent of the drink curse and the right remedy for it. By the same means public conscience must be roused, enthusiasm developed and the forces of right rallied to the fray.

Circulate literature. Let this be our watchword. It is not only an effective, but an easy and simple plan of work. Every friend of our cause can take part in it. If you do not know how, read the article in another part of this paper, headed "A New Plan." Wise work on the lines therein set out will surely accompany rich results.

A SCIENTIST'S VERDICT.

A noted sociological investigator has published the results of an inquiry into the drinking habits of Europe, and sums up as follows:

"We find that the two banner countries for freedom of commerce and industry—Switzerland and Holland—are also the most advanced in restricting the freedom of the alcoholic drink traffic, and that despotic Russia comes next.

"That the two most educated nations—France and Germany—are more drunken than the most ignorant—Russia, England and Spain.

"That wealth proves to be a more prolific cause of drunkenness than poverty, the surplus earnings being too often expended in drink.

"That wine and beer are not temperance drinks and that the two countries inhabited by the chief wine and beer drinkers, and in which the wines and beers are of the lightest character—viz.: France and Belgium—are the most drunken; while Russia—almost wholly brandy drinking—is a relatively sober country."—*The Constitution*.

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

A splendid harvest story comes from South Ayrshire. A group of Juvenile Templars were out in the harvest field watching the reapers. The farmer first asked one and then another of the boys to go for the beer for the harvesters. All of them declined, and gave as their reason that they were members of the Independent Order of Good Templars, and were pledged not to give or accept alcoholic liquors. This so much interested two of the workmen that they wished further information about an Order that trained its children so well. These two workmen are now the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent of a juvenile lodge in the adjoining village.—*Scottish Good Templar*.