

## The Advocate.

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## THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

Now that my period of service as a representative of one side of the question before the Royal Commission on the liquor traffic has ceased, I may, without impropriety, make reference to certain criticisms in relation thereto which have recently appeared in the Prohibition press. In this I have no intention of entering upon a defence of the Commission—that body is amply able to take care of itself. But I do protest, and that most strongly, against the statement that I, as representative of the brewers and distillers, was accorded any privilege, any favor, anything at all that was not just as freely given to the representatives, for the time being, of the Prohibitionists.

This charge has been repeated ad nauseam. The Commission had not been taking evidence a day until it was made. It has been kept up ever since, and was as untrue on the first day as on the last. It was started at Halifax, where, at that very time, the Prohibitionists had as representatives before the tribunal not only Mr. Spence, but a local lawyer hired for the occasion, together with a large committee in constant attendance. It was repeated at St. John where again there was legal counsel and a strong committee in attendance. It was repeated all along the line. It was reiterated in Toronto with such vehemence that in an attempt, if possible, to satisfy these people the Commission made a second visit at which I did not call a single witness. And even then they were not satisfied. It is finally asked up again in connection with my evidence taken in Montreal and that the old leggie may be made to do duty absolute untruths are told by newspapers that profess to speak from the highest moral standpoint.

Whence all this perturbation on the part of our Prohibition friends? Why this continued re-iterated clamor that they are not receiving fair play? Are they afraid of the evidence? Do they fear the facts? I believe so. They started out by calling it the Prohibition Commission. They ended by calling it the Rum Commission. As sure as day they have followed the advice of the American lawyer, "then you have to case some your opponent." Will they specify wherein they have been unfairly dealt with; will they give an instance

wherein I, as representing one side, was accorded a privilege they as representing the other were refused? The Commission travelled upon one occasion 1,600 miles to visit a place at their request and then only to find that they had been fooled, to find a license law in force where they had come to view the beauties of Prohibition. At different times Mr. Spence, Rev. Dr. Milner of Kansas, Mr. Carson of Montreal, and sundry others have represented the Prohibitionists. Will any one of these gentlemen specify an instance where I received a favor not open to them. Will either one deny that I did not treat them fairly as opponents and always as friends. I say that the charge that undue favor was shown anyone is an absolute falsehood, and I use this unparliamentary language so that there may be no mistaking my meaning.

The Royal Commission on the probable results of Prohibition has evidently ceased to attach any importance to the judicial character of its mission, as the public has long ceased to do. The majority of its members appear openly in the role of opponents of Prohibition, to whom all advocacy of any such measure is irksome.

This is from the Montreal *Witness*. The charge about not "attaching any importance to the judicial character of its mission," is too puerile to be worthy of comment, but that "the majority of its members appear openly in the role of opponents of Prohibition" may take a word. Will the *Witness* specify when and where they have so appeared? Will the editor of the *Witness* state upon what occasion or occasions he has been in company with members of the Commission "openly" or otherwise. I have seen enough of members of the Commission to venture the assertion that he cannot prove that statement.

Now I will make a statement and that is, that one member of the Commission, Rev. Dr. McLeod, has been from the start, publicly and privately, on the bench and off it, an open supporter of Prohibition, determined to establish Prohibition if possible and to whom all advocacy of license was irksome. I am not reflecting upon the Rev. gentleman in this, it was a natural impossibility for him to be otherwise, but it is possible that the mighty censor who weighs down the editorial chair in the *Witness* office cannot see both sides? It looks like it.

They took every means to show their contempt for Mr. Spence's evidence, while to that of Mr. Kriss, the hired advocate of the liquor trade, they were most solicitously attentive, bending their whole energies on having every comma in it rightly placed.

This again from the truly good *Witness*. Now to show the even handed justice which this editor metes out. He was not present when I was being examined at all. A reporter of his paper was present some three hours and I was on the stand two days and a half. From what source does he get his information. I tell him that he does not know what he is talking about, that he is bearing false witness, both as regards Mr. Spence and myself.

What does he mean by the term

"hired advocate"? What is he "hired" for. To abuse men like Sir Joseph Hickson whose name will be remembered when his is dust? To malign a man like Judge McDonald, as good a temperance man as his employer ever was; a man honored by his County, his Province, and his Church? To traduce a man like E. F. Clarke, four times Mayor of Toronto, and for now eight years a representative of his city in the Legislature? To vilify such a man as the Deputy Minister of Agriculture of Quebec, who is to-day doing more for the good of his Province in a week than the *Witness* and its whole following is likely to do in a year? Is this the kind of thing he is "hired" to do?

This sapient blunderer intimates that I was wrong in saying that Mr. Dyer, of Bromes, voted against Prohibition. In the session of 1891, Mr. Jamieson introduced a resolution declaring that the time had come to pass a Prohibitory Law. An amendment was moved declaring that the resolution do not pass, but that a Royal Commission be appointed. Mr. Dyer voted for this amendment, and if that is not voting against Prohibition I do not know what would be. The next year Mr. Dyer was elected in Bromes by acclamation. Mr. Sidney Fisher, the great Prohibitionist of the eastern townships, not daring to face him. But enough of this rib-stabbing sheet.

The utter unfairness of the Royal Commission is illustrated in their acceptance of voluminous printed documents from Kriss, the representative of the liquor men, while Spence, the Alliance man, was bullied and worried, and cut down in his evidence a few months ago in Toronto, and got the same treatment again last Saturday in Montreal.

This is from the *Templar*. The only objectionable feature about it is that it is not true. Bro. Buchanan is always fair; in this instance he has been misinformed.

At the sitting of the Royal Commission held in Montreal on the 1st inst., the case of the liquor interests of the Dominion was presented by the agent, Mr. L. P. Kriss, who has been for a year or more in their employ, working up the case, both in procuring evidence to present in the various provinces and in the collection of "facts" and "arguments." The document containing these has been withheld until the very last days of the sittings. Whether that may have been the object or not in its late presentation pretty well precludes putting in any corrections or reply. The "evidence" thus presented turned out to be quite an elaborate volume of no less than eighty-five printed pages, of which quite a number of copies have been previously printed. The reading occupied an entire day of the Commission. Some of the members had their doubts about the propriety of allowing such a lengthy printed document to go in as "evidence," but it seems to have been pretty well understood from the outset that a majority are on good terms with him. It was therefore read formally and handed in for publication in the report, with the understanding that some parts may be eliminated if deemed too much like special pleading. Of course, the object is at the tail end of a ponderous report, which will probably appear some months hence.

This is from the *Citizen and Home Guard* upon which Deacon Cameron and

Bro. Casey unite their labors. It is open to the same objection as the previous excerpt in that the statements contained therein are not facts. The document was not "withheld," and it did not go in as "evidence," and the "object" was not as stated, and a large number of copies had not been previously printed.

Now for the facts. When I had gotten my notes prepared I found them to be of such bulk, containing so many statistical tables, etc., that it was an absolute necessity to put them in some more convenient form. I therefore had them printed. I received the first bound copy on Monday night, and appeared before the Commission on Friday. So much for the withholding. The "large number of copies" was twenty-five. I have about half of them yet. When I appeared before the Commission and was sworn, I laid a copy upon the table, stated what it was and submitted it for the Commission to make such use of as that body might deem desirable. The Commission decided not to accept it as evidence. I then gave evidence just as any other witness would, being allowed the use of the pamphlet because it was a simple impossibility for anyone to carry such a mass of details in mind. The pamphlet did not go in as evidence, a large part of it will not appear in the report at all, a large part of my testimony as it will appear was not in the pamphlet. Nor is my evidence "at the tail end of a ponderous report" as a subsequent two days' session at Ottawa adds to the ponderosity.

That is all there is No it. The trouble with our Prohibition friends is that their cause will not stand investigation, and the work of the Commission has shown it. I do not care what report the Commission makes, I know what the evidence is, and I know that it is absolute annihilation of the Prohibition cause. The people of this country will read the evidence for themselves and will form their own conclusion. That conclusion will be against Prohibition. But permit me to say with all deference that it is balayish to cry about not having had fair play, especially before you are hit.

LOUIS P. KRISS.

## THE QUIXOTISM OF PROHIBITION.

GENERAL NEAL DOW, the father of the prevailing state of things in Maine, which is business stagnation, a dullness to which the dullness of ditchwater bears the same relation as it does to mud, slow growth, and vice that in its viciousness exceeds anything that can be imagined, has just passed his ninetieth birthday. He is not the first man who has reached that age, nor is he a proof that liquor is valueless, for it is a notorious fact that aged people live for years on small doses of brandy, whiskey and wine when too feeble to take any solid food. General Neal Dow has lived by rote and, given a good constitution, almost any man so living will reach a mellow age.

Forty-three years ago Neal Dow was largely instrumental in getting a prohibi-