

spirit of the license question. At the time the Constitution of the State was revised, the leading temperance men, fearing that they had not strength enough to carry prohibition, took as their second choice the position that a clause be inserted denying the State the power ever to grant a license, thus leaving the liquor traffic to stand upon its own basis. And strange as it may appear, this move was bitterly opposed by liquor sellers and their minions. They clamored for a restrictive measure. Now, can any sane mind believe that it was their zeal for the welfare of society that prompted them to desire restrictive legislation? No; their object was to secure a monopoly and to throw the responsibility of their wicked business upon the people. They knew, too, that their respectability depended upon the sustaining influence of legislative protection. The temperance men triumphed, and though the boon they asked was small indeed, yet the securing of it was a triumph, and experience has proved that no legislation at all was far preferable to the iniquitous compact with evil that before existed. Its effect was, as foreseen, to rob the business of its proud position, and the consequence is that in many of the rural towns of the State not a grog shop can be found.

I cannot close without again exhorting the sons of Canada to declare an uncompromising war upon that unholy alliance which disgraces our fair country, which magnifies and makes honorable a traffic that is filling our land with blood. Yes, the land smokes with blood: there is a crimson glare by the hearth and the saloon; the cry of murder rings out upon the midnight air, and the clots of its slaughter are thick upon the morning altar; the licensed pits of our country are belching forth violence and death; midnight assassination strikes hands with noonday murder, and together lift boldly their smoking hands to public gaze; half chilled corpses are lying by the desolate hearth, and innocence is wailing and sobbing upon lips that are cold forever; the enginery of the pit rolls on in infernal grandeur, propelled by the power of the law, and grinds to ruin the infatuated hosts; the greenest and holiest sanctuaries of earth are wasting day by day by public sanction; the brightest hopes of earth and heaven are crushed out forever; the land is filled with rottenness and death, for our rulers have for money made a covenant with death and established iniquity by law; the heart sickens at the sight, and, looking up to heaven, exclaims—How long, O Lord, how long till the light of thy truth shall open the eyes of a deluded people? Have they not yet suffered enough? Are pauperism and crime yet to have fresh hosts? Are there hungry graves yet to fill? Are there homes yet to be desolated, and hopes yet to be blasted? Must tragedies yet be enacted that will freeze the blood and cover earth with a pall of woe? I feel that each manly heart here is ready to exclaim—This system must and shall have an end. And if you cannot overcome it in your day, resolve to make Hannibals of your sons to come after you to the fight. I trust that you will go from this your annual council animated by a higher purpose and a nobler faith. Close up the ranks, brothers, and gird yourselves for the struggle. The Order is yet a power in the land; let us resolve to make that power felt; rebuild the altars that have fallen down; and, by the light of faith and hope, kindle again the watch fires; and so sure as there is a God who rules in righteousness, we shall yet prevail.

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