

# THE CAMP FIRE

A Monthly Record and Advocate of the Temperance Reform.

VOL. V. No. 9.

TORONTO, ONT. MARCH, 1899.

25 CENTS PER YEAR

## NO!

### The Dominion Government Declines to Accede to the Request of the Prohibitionists.

Ottawa, 4th March, 1899.

DEAR MR. SPENCE.—When the delegation of the Dominion Alliance waited upon the Government last fall, to ask, as a consequence of the plebiscite, the introduction of prohibitory legislation, they based their demand upon the fact that on the total of the vote cast there was a majority in favor of the principle of prohibition. The exact figures of the votes recorded were not at that time accurately known, but the official figures, which we have now, show that on the question put to the electors, 278,487 voted yea, and 264,571 voted nay. After the official figures had been made public, it was contended by some of the opponents of prohibition that the margin of difference between the majority and the minority was so slight that it practically constituted a tie, and there was, therefore, no occasion for the Government to pronounce one way or the other. The Government does not share that view. We are of the opinion that the fairest way of approaching the question is by the consideration of the total vote cast in favor of prohibition, leaving aside altogether the vote recorded against it.

"In that view of the question, the record shows that the electorate of Canada, to which the question was submitted, comprised 1,233,849 voters, and of that number less than 23 per cent., or a trifle over one-fifth, affirmed their conviction in the principle of prohibition.

"If we remember that the object of the plebiscite was to give an opportunity to those who have at heart the cause of prohibition, who believed that the people was with them, and that if the question were voted upon by itself, without any other issue which might detract from its consideration, a majority of the electorate would respond, and thus show the Canadian people prepared and ready for its adoption, it must be admitted that the expectation was not justified by the event. On the other hand, it was argued before us by yourself and others, that as the plebiscite campaign was carried out by the friends of prohibition without any expenditure of money and without the usual excitement of political agitation, the vote recorded in favor of it was comparatively a large one. This statement I did not then controvert, nor do I controvert it here and now. I would simply remark that the honesty of the vote did not suffer from the absence of those causes of excitement, and that even if the totality of the vote might have been somewhat increased by such cause, its moral force would not have been made any stronger. I venture to submit for your consideration, and the consideration of the members of the Dominion Alliance, who believe in prohibition as the most efficient means of suppressing the evils of intemperance, that no good purpose would be served by forcing upon the people a measure which is shown by the vote to have the support of less than 23 per cent. of the electorate. Neither would it serve any good purpose to enter here into further controversy on the many incidental points discussed before us. My object is to simply convey to you the conclusion that, in our judgment, the expression of public opinion recorded at the polls in favor of prohibition, did not represent such a proportion of the electorate as would justify the introduction by the Government of a prohibitory measure.

"I have the honor to be, dear Mr. Spence,

"Yours very sincerely,

(Sgd.) "WILFRID LAURIER."

Kindly read this paper carefully. Can you afford to do without it? In the coming campaign you will need the facts and arguments that you cannot get anywhere else. The price is very small. Send us your subscription if you are not a subscriber already.

## NOTES AND NEWS.

### WEALTH FROM POVERTY.

In Great Britain during the year 1898, thirty brewers and malsters died, leaving estates aggregating in value \$13,619,215. This was an average of \$450,000 each. What an enormous amount of poverty must have been caused by the traffic which accumulated this great wealth.

### THE INTERNATIONAL.

At Paris, France, during Easter week, will be held the seventh International Congress against the abuse of alcoholic liquors. The Congress will open on Tuesday, April 4th, and is expected to be unusually large and important. The programme published gives a list of papers to be presented, prepared by leading temperance reformers in many parts of the world.

### A GREAT CONVENTION.

Arrangements have been made for holding the next Convention of the World's W.C.T.U. in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1900. It will follow the World's Temperance Congress in London, to be held the first week in June. These two great gatherings will help each other, and result in probably the greatest assemblage of temperance reformers from every part of the world, that has yet been held.

### TOTAL PROHIBITION.

A very important official regulation has been promulgated by the Secretary of the United States Navy in the following order, which has been sent to the commanders of all navy yards and war vessels:

"After mature deliberation the department has decided that it is for the best interests of the service that the sale or issue to enlisted men of malt or other alcoholic liquors on board ships of the navy, or within the limits of naval stations, be prohibited. Therefore, after the receipt of this order, commanding officers and commandants are forbidden to allow any malt or alcoholic liquors to be sold or issued to enlisted men either on board ships or within the limits of the navy yards, naval stations and marine barracks, except in the medical department."

### PROPOSED LEGISLATION.

A document has been published in Great Britain purporting to be a draft of the forthcoming report of the Commission that has been inquiring into the liquor traffic and the working of the license laws. The most important reforms recommended are a reduction in the number of licenses, the registration of all clubs, the prohibition of the sale of liquor to persons under sixteen years of age, prohibition of the sale of liquor by grocers and druggists, and the introduction of an elective element into licensing boards. The report is not yet published.

### THE IMPERIAL PARLIAMENT.

The British Parliament has before it at the present time a number of bills relating to the temperance question, among them being local option measures for England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, and bills proposing to entirely prohibit the sale of intoxicating liquors on Sunday in England and in Ireland. Lord Stanley has introduced a Bill to

legalize the sale of liquor in the Parliament buildings which had been, and still is, carried on without any authority. The bill is a very short one, containing besides the preamble and title, only the following clause:

"Nothing in the Licensing Acts, 1872 and 1874, or any Acts amending the same, or in any enactment relating to the revenue of excise shall affect or apply to the sale of intoxicating liquor in the building known as the Palace of Westminster for consumption therein."

### PUBLIC OPINION.

An interesting plebiscite on the question of liquor legislation has just been taken in the Montrose-Burgs in Scotland, which are represented in Parliament by Mr. John Morley. Cards were sent to the voters and collected. The total vote polled amounted to 5,392. The question submitted was as follows:

"Do you wish Parliament to terminate all liquor licenses at the end of a period of years, to be fixed by the Legislature; thereafter the people to have full and complete control of the liquor traffic?"

The result of the voting was as follows:

Yes .....	4,819
No .....	573

No fewer than 53½ per cent. of the total number of voters on the rolls marked their ballots in the "Yes" column. Mr. Morley, when elected by this constituency, had a majority of 1,993, but the total vote he polled was 254 less than the vote polled in the affirmative in the plebiscite.

### EDUCATED DRUNKARDS.

An absurd theory that education will remedy the evils of intemperance is made manifest by Rev. J. W. Horsley in his famous book on "Prisons and Prisoners." Among other strong statements made by this eminent philanthropist are the following:

"Brain workers provide the most hopeless cases of dipsomania. Increased brain power, more brain-work; more brain exhaustion, more nervous desire for stimulant, more rapid succumbing to the alcohol habit—these are the stages that can be noted everywhere among those who had more 'schooling' than their fathers. Australia consumes more alcohol per head than any nation. In Australia primary education is more universal than in England, and yet there criminals have increased out of all proportion to the population. Of much crime, of many forms of crime, it is irrefragably true that crime is condensed alcohol; and it is certainly not true that the absolutely or comparatively illiterate alone comprise those who swell these categories."

### THE NEW PARTY LEADER.

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, the new leader of the Liberal party in Great Britain, expressed himself in his last election address as approving of the Government proposal to authorize localities to prohibit the sale of intoxicating liquor. This is in fact a fixed item in the programme of the Liberal party. In the same election contest Sir William Harcourt is reported as expressing his position in the following terms:

"If temperance legislation was unpopular they must make it popular. They must educate the people into seeing what was to their own interest, and into consulting the benefit of the community to which they should belong. The bill for which he was responsible, and for the responsibility of which he was not ashamed, had been called a tyrannical bill, which was to put away every public house and deprive people of proper opportunities of refreshment. That was absolutely untrue. The bill did nothing of the kind. It left the parish, or district, or ward to do what its population desired should be done in regard to the matter. If any change were made at all it must be made by the

people themselves. It was a principle thoroughly Liberal and absolutely democratic. The Liberal principle was the government of the people by the people."

### IMPORTANT HISTORY.

Inquiries are frequently made regarding the facts of certain incidents in the history of the prohibition movement in Canada. There is hardly an event that has not been to some extent misrepresented. Garbled statistics have been published regarding the working of the Scott Act in different localities. The brief experiment of total prohibition in New Brunswick is represented as a failure. Many other events are partially forgotten or not thoroughly understood.

It is proposed to publish in the Camp Fire a series of articles setting out accurately the details relating to a number of such events, showing what actually occurred, and making clear the lessons to be learned from their history.

Students and advocates of prohibition will find these papers of incalculable value in their researches and work. The first will be published in our issue for April.

## THE SERPENT'S TRAIL.

### SOME CANADIAN SPECIMENS.

A married man named Landsley, who had been drinking very heavily, attempted suicide by cutting his throat in Toronto, on Wednesday, Feb. 1st.

A shocking crime was committed at Hamilton, Ont., on Wednesday, Feb. 8th. A man named Parrott, dehumanized by strong drink, brutally murdered his mother with an axe. Punishment will, no doubt, be meted out to the wretched man, while those who made money out of his drunkenness will not be asked by the court to explain their conduct which is authorized by law.

Among the news from Vancouver, B.C., of February 15th, was an account of the arrest of a boy of eight years, who was taken up in a shocking state of intoxication. He was conveyed to his home, but became so violent that his mother requested to have him locked up.

A press despatch from Chesley, Ont., dated February 25th, reports a case of shocking brutality on the part of Charles Haines, a confirmed drunkard, who announced to his family at midnight, his intention of setting fire to their home. His wife and children rushed from the house. A daughter Maggie, aged fourteen, had not time to dress herself, and outside the house she was seized by her father who held her till her feet were terribly frozen. Her mother attempted to get the child free, and was severely bitten by the drunken ruffian.

### THE CURSE SPREADING.

Shiploads of rum and beer are being sent to Porto Rico, Cuba, and the Philippines. So say the papers. For this spreading of the liquor curse the United States is directly responsible. Is it to be that our acquiring control of those islands is to be followed by our inflicting the rum curse upon the helpless inhabitants and thereby ruin them, "in the interests of trade," as we have ruined the Indians? Is the greed of the rum power, with its ability to dominate in its own interests, the policy of the Government to make our possessing those islands a curse instead of a blessing to the inhabitants? The Almighty crowned our army and navy with signal victories, and thereby opened for us the opportunity of being the messengers of peace, good will and prosperity to those islands. Shall we disregard His mercies by ungratefully inflicting upon His children the woe of drunkenness and inebriety?—*Religious Telescope.*