

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.

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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, JUNE, 1902

THE ELECTION RESULTS.

The result of the general Provincial election has been the sustaining of the Ross Government by a very narrow majority. The most important feature of the situation from a prohibition standpoint is that there is in the new House a strong contingent of men known to be personally in favor of total prohibition.

It is generally and freely admitted by leading Liberals that their party suffered serious loss because of dissatisfaction on the part of the temperance electorate. They admit that in several constituencies the party lost enough temperance votes to turn the scale in favor of the Opposition. It is to be hoped that the lesson will not be lost.

In the Liberal party and in the Liberal caucus a strong element argued in favor of a fair vote in the referendum and of holding the poll on the date of the municipal election. Had this element prevailed, the Government would have won for itself a support that would have made the Liberal majority in the House a strong and substantial one. As it was, the constituency of London, and probably South Wellington and South Oxford, were lost through the alienation of the votes of prohibitionists.

Two independent candidates, Mr. Marter in North Toronto, and Mr. Spencer in West Simcoe, both prohibitionists, were confronted by straight Conservative nominees. Both were defeated. Mr. Marter's failure to secure re-election will be a serious loss to the prohibition cause. His manly and independent stand in the Legislature was admired and appreciated by all classes. He had, however, to contend with the difficulty of not being supported by any party machine. It is doubtful if any member of the new Legislature will take the leading position which Mr. Marter took in the advocacy of prohibition legislation on the floor of the House.

The most successful independent prohibition movement was that carried out in North Oxford. This constituency is strongly Liberal. The prohibitionists nominated Mr. D. R. Ross, of Embro, and made so strong an effort in his behalf that they polled 1,150 votes, 96 more than were secured by the regular Conservative nominee. The straight party Liberal candidate, however, polled a larger vote than the combined votes of the independent and Conservative candidates.

Independent candidates were also nominated by prohibitionists in London, South Wellington, South West, worth and Lincoln, both political parties having nominees in these constituencies. Mr. F. Daly made a splendid campaign in London, polling 793 votes, and winning for himself the admiration and respect of many electors who were not prepared to sacrifice their party preferences to support an independent prohibitionist. Had he been the nominee of either party, his success would have been assured. Alderman Carter put up a strong fight in South Wellington, polling 413 votes. The votes polled by the other prohibition candidates were comparatively small.

Enough has been accomplished, however, to show that with organization and effort, prohibitionists hold the balance of power in many constituencies. They have learned for themselves and shown to the politicians, that the number of electors ready to put principle before party is large enough to overthrow any government or defeat any political party against which temperance workers choose to combine. This admitted fact will not be soon forgotten.

Both Conservative and Liberal candidates in East Peterboro declared themselves prohibitionists. The Conservative nominees in West Peterboro and West Huron took the same position, and prohibitionists made a strong effort on behalf of the two latter candidates, but without success. There is little doubt, however, that the indifference of temperance Liberals in some other constituencies lessened or wiped out the Government majority. It may be fairly concluded that the loss of temperance support fully accounts for the difference between the majority which the Government had when the Legislature was dissolved and the narrow majority by which it at present holds office.

AGREED TO FIGHT

As was expected there has been a general and strong expression of opinion by church conferences and other similar gatherings in favor of a vigorous campaign to secure the largest possible vote in the referendum on December 4th.

This action does not mean endorsement of the referendum conditions, nor acceptance of the theory that the carrying of prohibition should require any more than an ordinary majority of the votes cast. It simply accepts the duty of fighting against the liquor evil under all times and all circumstances and of effort to win prohibition notwithstanding any hampering conditions that may be imposed.

The contest has, therefore, practically begun. Organization has in many places been planned for the contest. This work ought to be completed everywhere without delay. The great convention of July 29th will be a part of the campaign, and the prospects are good for a determined effort to roll up a big vote for the referendum.

THE LIQUOR MEN'S POLICY.

In Manitoba the liquor party took advantage of differences of opinion among prohibition workers and a loosely framed law to win for themselves the advantage of polling a nominal majority of the votes cast on the question and adopting provincial prohibition.

Their plan was made practicable by bad legislation under which an enormous vote against prohibition was polled by improper practice of the most widespread and flagrant character. The total Manitoba vote against prohibition in 1902 was 7,115. In the Dominion Plebiscite of 1898 the anti-prohibition vote was only 2,978. It is absurd to imagine that an honest vote of 22,464 could be secured in favor of the liquor traffic in 1902.

The difference of opinion among temperance people as to the wisdom of taking any part in a grossly unfair election had the result of making the prohibition vote much less than what it ought to have been and much less than what would fairly represent the prohibition sentiment of the Province. Thus circumstances united to enable the liquor men to obtain the result of a counted majority of votes against provincial prohibition.

In Ontario the conditions are altogether different. The election will not be carried on under the loose methods that prevailed in Manitoba. Prohibitionists are united in going into the fight to do the best that can be done. It is in the liquor party now that uncertainty and hesitation exists.

The liquor men are still hopeful that prohibitionists will not obtain the large vote they must poll to win on December 4th. They have no hope at all of securing a majority against prohibition of the votes that will be cast. They had fondly hoped that disunion would prevail among temperance workers, lessening the prohibition vote and enabling the anti-prohibitionists to come out of the contest with a majority in favor of their views. They have now no hope of securing any advantage in the coming contest.

If the united temperance party poll the required number of votes, prohibition will prevail. Even if the hopes of the liquor men should be fulfilled, and the prohibitionists fail to meet the requirements of the referendum, the result would still be certainly a strong majority in favor of prohibition. The liquor men see clearly that they will have to face the fact of a strong demonstration of public opinion against the business they are carrying on.

They fear to fight lest their activity may stimulate the temperance people to greater success. They fear to stay away from the polls lest the prohibition majority may be more overwhelming than before. They are in a quandary just now, as to what course it is best for them to take.

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IMPORTANT.

TORONTO, 1902.

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We are embarking on a campaign for prohibition legislation in which the liquor traffic will do its utmost to block, delay, and if possible prevent our securing the enactment and enforcement of useful 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 **The Camp Fire** will also be of special value for distribution. We must keep up our 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.

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