

The Camp Fire.

A MONTHLY JOURNAL
OF TEMPERANCE PROGRESS.

SPECIALLY DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF
THE PROHIBITION CAUSE.

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Subscription, TWENTY-FIVE CENTS a Year.

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, MAY, 1896.

THE PRIVY COUNCIL DECISION.

The long delayed decision of the Imperial Privy Council upon the question of provincial jurisdiction in relation to the liquor traffic has at last been rendered. Unfortunately the cable summaries of this judgment are so condensed as to be imperfect, and it is impossible at the time of writing this to ascertain exactly the full import of that judgment.

One thing however, is absolutely certain and that is, that the right of provincial legislatures to enact local option laws has been affirmed. The legislation of the different provinces authorizing electors to locally prohibit the traffic in intoxicating beverages has therefore been conclusively upheld, and a wide field is open for effective work.

This ruling will be of special value to the province of Ontario. That province's local option law had been declared invalid by the Supreme Court of Canada. This decision had practically rendered the law inoperative where it had been passed, and had terminated all agitation for its further adoption. There will be a sudden change. The law will be enforced where it is carried, and will no doubt win many victories in new territory. Ontario prohibitionists are heartily to be congratulated upon this.

The decision also makes it clear that a provincial legislature has no right to prohibit the importation of intoxicating liquor. As has been stated, the other points involved in the decision are yet uncertain. The full text of the judgment will arrive in a few days and we shall then know exactly where we stand. If, as some anticipate, provincial legislatures have power to prohibit, then we may look for important legislation in nearly all the provinces.

It is also certain that no doubt has been cast upon the power of the Dominion Parliament to enact prohibitory legislation. Few people had any doubt regarding this matter. It is well, however, to have it again emphatically re-affirmed in view of the approaching Dominion election.

THE ONTARIO CONVENTION.

The decision of the Privy Council having been rendered, there will be a gathering of Ontario prohibitionists in the city of Toronto early in July. Probably in a few days the official announcement of this Convention will be issued.

The gathering will be one of unusual importance. It will have before it the full text of the long expected decision.

The way will be clear for an immediate advance. A vigorous campaign for the further extension of prohibition under local option will no doubt be warmly advocated.

Another point that will receive special attention will be fresh provincial legislation. Sir Oliver Mowat's pledge was that prohibitory legislation would be enacted if the province had power to enact it. Public opinion however, will demand advance legislation in any case. The decision will simply decide whether that legislation is to be prohibition or further restriction.

The promise of the Attorney General was taken as meaning that he would promote legislation in the interests of the temperance cause to the limit of the power which the legislation is shown to possess. We shall look confidently for further sweeping legislation for curtailing the power of the evil working traffic and coming into actual operation not less than May 1st, 1897.

THE DOMINION ELECTION.

The Dominion Alliance has issued an address in view of the approaching election. This document is a stirring bugle-call to action, and ought to meet with a hearty response from every earnest prohibitionist in Canada. We have now an opportunity of promoting our cause such as seldom occurs.

In the coming contest party lines will be less sharply defined than usual. The different issues before the people are such, that there will be many combinations of electors who have not heretofore worked together, and many refusals of electors to stand by the political party to which they have hitherto adhered.

In this loosening up of party affiliation, conscience and high motive will no doubt receive more attention and influence more votes than has generally been the case. More votes than ever will probably be cast by men who give prohibition a prominent place in their political creed.

We have a splendid opportunity for effective missionary work. During the next few weeks new converts may be won to our ranks and those who are with us now may be educated into closer adhesion to right principle. Let our friends be active in every constituency.

PLEDGING CANDIDATES.

It is sometimes argued that no advantage is gained from the pledging of candidates. Men who are decidedly in favour of prohibition, will work for the promotion of that reform whether or not they have promised to do so. Promises are sometimes given most readily by men who are least likely to fulfil them.

There is however, some danger that the strongest promises will be given by those who are not our best friends.

The kind of candidate in whom prohibitionists can most unhesitatingly confide is the man who is a known and avowed prohibitionist, a personal abstainer and a fearless champion of what he believes. Such a representative will help us as much unpledged as if he were sworn.

There are many men however, who while not having strong convictions on this particular question, are honorable enough to carry out any promise they may make. A pledge before election will thus sometimes give us a champion afterwards that we would not have secured without that pledge. That pledge will often be more readily given by such a candidate before his election than afterwards. Moreover, the pledge will not keep our true

friends from doing their best for the cause to which they are pledged. Pledging candidates may thus place us in a stronger and better position.

We must however, act judiciously. If we pay regard only to the answers that are given to propounded questions, we may select a wrong man. In some constituencies we may by insisting upon strong promises weaken the chances for election of men who are friendly. It is impossible to lay down a hard and fast rule that is to be followed in every case.

The true friends of prohibition in every locality are best qualified to decide as to the plan that ought to be adopted. Details must be left to them. For the information and assistance of those who wish to question candidates, we submit two questions as suggestive of what may wisely be used.

1. Are you in favor of the prohibition of the traffic in intoxicating beverages?
2. If elected to the House of Commons, will you do all in your power, in co-operation with the other members of Parliament who favor prohibition, to secure the introduction and enactment of prohibitory legislation at the earliest possible opportunity?

CHURCH GATHERINGS.

We are at the time of the year when Conferences, Synods, Unions and other ecclesiastical bodies hold their regular annual sessions. At most of these gatherings the temperance question will be discussed. The imminence of the Dominion elections will no doubt add both interest and importance to these discussions.

Our present position calls for boldness, aggressiveness and wisdom. We have before us to-day splendid opportunities for accomplishing much. They bring with them opportunities for doing harm. Everywhere feelings are unusually tense. Men's prejudices are usually sensitive. It is easy to make enemies of those who by judicious management might be made ardent friends.

Earnestly we appeal to our friends to stand firmly by the right cause unhesitatingly and unyieldingly, refusing compromise with what is evil. At the same time we earnestly plead for kindness and toleration towards those who differ from us in opinion. We shall need during the coming year all the friends we can win.

We can neither afford to antagonize those who may help us, nor lower the standard under which we fight. Now is the time to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

ONE SIDE OR THE OTHER.

If you are Prohibitionist, say so and stick to it. In the name of all the good to be accomplished by Prohibition let the world know where you stand. The indecisions of the hour daily with eternal interests. "Why halt ye between two opinions?"

You owe an apology to no one for being a Prohibitionist. Against Prohibition there is no law of heaven and no principle of law to govern among men.

If you are not a Prohibitionist for decency's sake don't claim to be one, but rather say nothing about it. Hug the old whiskey parties to your confidence and vote that ticket till "whisky" by the power which you have helped to give it accomplishes its purpose if you will, but don't say you are a Prohibitionist while you are doing it. That adds insult to injury and is in bad taste, besides the responsibility is too great, the interest too vast, and life's opportunities too brief to make it a matter of jest. The world wants true men to meet requirements of the present time.

"Men whom the lust of office does not kill:

Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy."

Far better is it that fewer men who are true to its principles advocate Prohibition than that many embrace it only to leave it stranded when the evil day of testing their fidelity to the principle arrives.

Which side will you take? At least, cease claiming to be that you are not; and "Choose you this day whom you will serve."—*The Leaflet.*

THE VANGUARD.

A GREAT WORK—READ CAREFULLY.

The VANGUARD was published during the stirring years of 1893 and 1894 in the form of a magazine. It was devoted to expert discussion of the liquor question and the many matters thereto related. Prohibition workers found it a "mine" of information, and many of them desired to have its articles put into a form adapted for permanent use and reference.

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