

NOTES OF A YEAR'S WORK.

NOVA SCOTIA.

The agitation for a Dominion Plebiscite on prohibition was started in this Province by the Sons of Temperance in 1887. The promoters, however, failed to secure the necessary co-operation, and later on a Provincial Plebiscite was proposed. The Grand Division prepared and circulated petitions asking for the necessary legislation. Voting took place on March 15th, 1894, when a general Provincial election was being held. Over five-sixths of those voting for candidates voted for or against prohibition also.

The time allowed for preparation in the 1894 campaign was only a few weeks. Churches and temperance organizations worked enthusiastically. The W.C.T.U. superintended literature distribution with much success. Meetings were largely attended. Interest and energy characterized the whole campaign. In the campaign of last year our workers had more time for preparation, and more thorough organization, but had to face the great difficulties of independent voting, and a campaign in midsummer when a large number of the best workers were away and successful indoor meetings almost impossible. Party feeling also was rife, detracting from the interest and enthusiasm that would otherwise have prevailed, and though earnest efforts were made, and more literature circulated, it was not found possible to evoke as much spontaneous work and energy as on the former occasion.

A Provincial Convention was held at Halifax, on August 23rd, 1898. Organization had, however, been commenced earlier in some counties. Arrangements were made for reaching points not yet organized. About 200,000 copies of "Forward," and about 2,000,000 copies of leaflets were circulated. The vote polled for prohibition, however, was only 79 per cent. of the prohibition vote of 1894, and the vote against prohibition was only 43 per cent. of the anti vote of 1894. Every county in the Province gave a majority in favor of prohibition.

An instructive feature of the voting results is the fact that the parts of Nova Scotia in which at present the Canada Temperance Act is in force, and which have had from fifteen to nineteen years' experience of actual prohibition, although containing only sixty-nine per cent. of the electorate, gave in 1894, eighty-four per cent., and in 1898, eighty-five per cent. of the majority given by the Province for prohibition in each case.

Under license law the universal result has been increased consumption of intoxicating liquor; under the Canada Temperance Act the universal result has been a steady falling off in liquor consumption.

NEW BRUNSWICK.

Prohibition work during the past year in the Province of New Brunswick, as in other parts of the Dominion, was chiefly in connection with the Plebiscite. The Province was fairly well organized for the campaign, which, especially in the few weeks preceding the vote, was carried on with commendable vigor. Many public meetings were held, a great deal of literature was distributed, the several organizations, including the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, were actively engaged in the work, and many churches rendered valuable service.

A few counties in the Province—those in which the French population is a large factor—were practically without general organization, though in some sections of them inhabited by English-speaking people, some very effective campaign work was done. The only parts of the Province which gave majorities against prohibition were those in which the French vote is very large.

The President and Treasurer of the Provincial Prohibition Association, Rev. Dr. McLeod and Mr. J. R. Woodburn, were appointed by the Executive of the Association to form part of the deputation that waited upon the Dominion Government in November last, to ask for legislation following up the victory of the Plebiscite. Rev. Dr. McLeod was one of the speakers.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

The year that has closed was one of high hopes, earnest work and sad disappointment to the prohibitionists of this Province.

When it became known that a Plebiscite on prohibition was to be held, the Executive of the Prince Edward Island Branch of the Dominion Alliance at once took steps to secure thorough organization and to carry on an effective campaign. The services of several prominent speakers were secured and meetings held in every part of the Province. About 310,000 pages of the Alliance campaign literature were procured and circulated. We were able, through the liberality of our friends, to cover all the expense of the contest. Every constituency in the Province gave a splendid majority in favor of prohibition, the aggregate vote polled being as follows:—

Votes in favor of prohibition	9,461
Votes against prohibition	1,146

Majority for prohibition	8,315
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This splendid result, accompanied as it was, by a majority throughout the whole Dominion, made us sanguine that some action would be taken by Parliament, and our workers were deeply grieved and dissatisfied when the Government refused to promote prohibitory legislation.

When the Federal Government's insincerity became apparent, we turned our attention to our Local Government, asking them to increase the restrictions of our present regulation law, which is in force in the City of Charlottetown, the only part of the

Province not under the operations of the Canada Temperance Act. We prepared an appeal proposing to further restrict the sale of liquor to minors, abolish treating, banish bar maids from saloons, delegatize clubs, prohibit liquor-selling on public holidays and prohibit sale in a polling division by a majority vote. We found the Government opposed to our appeal, and were told that unless we agreed to a tax upon liquor-sellers, the bill would be thrown out. The Alliance protested against the Province receiving any revenue out of the liquor traffic in any form. The Legislature, at the request of the Government, however, imposed a tax upon liquor selling and rejected all our proposed restrictions excepting that regarding treating, and the right of a majority to prohibit saloons. The advocates of the taxing plan claim that the fee imposed will close up smaller saloons. Our workers object to it as being the thin edge of the wedge of a license system, and fear that the proposal to raise a revenue from the liquor traffic, which has not been done in Prince Edward Island for many years, will be used as an inducement to some counties to repeal the Canada Temperance Act, which at present is accomplishing much good.

We are still looking to the Dominion Parliament for some advance in temperance legislation, which in view of the great majority secured in the Plebiscite, we have a right to expect.

MANITOBA.

The prohibition workers of Manitoba were well organized and the result of their activity was shown in the splendid majority polled against the liquor traffic in this Province in September last.

Early in February of the present year, the Manitoba Branch of the Alliance decided to ask the Provincial Legislature to prohibit the sale of intoxicating liquor to the fullest constitutional limit of the Province's power. Petition forms were prepared and sent out for circulation and signatures. A majority of the electoral divisions sent in petitions, in some cases very largely signed.

The local Branch of the Alliance followed up the petition movement in general by a deputation to the Government, urging the prayer of the petitioners. The deputation was joined by representatives of the Methodist Conference for Manitoba and the North-west Territories, and was thoroughly representative, numbering between five and six hundred persons. The President of the Alliance, Mr. W. R. Mulock; President of the Conference, Rev. Dr. Gaetz, and Mr. W. W. Buchanan, spoke in behalf of the deputation.

The Premier promised that his Government would endeavor to get their friends at Ottawa to enact legislation under which the Province would have a complete prohibitory law, but failing to obtain such legislation, his Government would cause legislation to be enacted to the fullest extent of the present power of the Province. The Premier's promise was understood by the deputation to mean legislation at the present session of the Legislature. The Premier has since stated that this was not his intention, but that such legislation will be introduced at the next session.

Since the deputation waited upon the Government, a general convention of the Conservative party has made prohibition of liquor-selling one of the planks of the party platform. Both parties are thus appealing to the electors upon practically the same platform in relation to this question. The Alliance will take steps to pledge all candidates.

It is the opinion of the Manitoba Branch of the Alliance that prohibitory legislation, to be effective, should be initiated and passed at the instance of the Government which must administer the law. It then becomes a feature of the administrative body, and a failure on the part of the Government to enforce the law would bring upon them the displeasure of a large number of electors.

BRITISH COLUMBIA.

The result of the Plebiscite campaign in this Province was exceedingly encouraging, considering the difficulties that prohibitionists had to encounter. The immense distances between various points of settlement, the geographical separation of the Province into sections, and the varied character of the population, were serious impediments to organization and work. At a well-attended convention, held in Vancouver, a Branch of the Dominion Alliance was formed and plans laid out. Some of our best workers took the field, the various churches and temperance societies joined heartily in with the new organization. A weekly paper, beginning at four pages and increased to eight, was published, entitled "The Campaign Bulletin," under editorial management of Rev. Dr. Eby. It started with 10,000 circulation, which grew to 12,500, being distributed gratuitously throughout the Province. An immense quantity of other literature was also circulated. The press of the Province as a whole, was not in sympathy with prohibition, which fact made an independent publication necessary. Campaign meetings were held in every part of the country, at street corners, in cities and other outdoor places, as well as in churches and schoolhouses. It had been predicted that British Columbia would be certain to go in favor of the liquor traffic. This opinion was not shared by those who had most knowledge and fullest faith in the moral sentiment of the country. The constituencies of Vancouver and Victoria, which are largely urban in their character, voted against prohibition. The other three constituencies gave good majorities in its favor, and the Province as a whole recorded a majority of 975 for prohibition out of a total of 10,487 votes polled.