

## THE CAMPAIGN.

This editorial clipped from the *Montreal Star*,  
*hits the nail on the head.*

### THE PLEBISCITE.

"There is a disposition on the part of most governments in Canada federal and provincial, to shirk the prohibition question. This is not altogether unnatural; governments are human devices, and prohibition as a political issue offers a maxim of risk with a minimum of possible party profit. Consequently practical politicians sit up late at night to devise new methods of humbugging the temperance vote. The present Government now stands definitely committed to take a plebiscite on the prohibition question. Inferentially if not directly it also stands committed in the event of the people of Canada declaring against the liquor traffic, to the introduction of a prohibitory law.

A very large number of the voters of Canada have demanded a poll on the question of prohibition, and have been promised a poll, and are entitled to have it without any more humbugging. They are entitled also to an honest, straightforward ballot, without any frills upon it. In a plebiscite there should be no possibility of the voter being confused by the wording of the ballot, or of the Government having any opportunity to misunderstand the meaning of the vote.

The one question to ask the voter in a plebiscite on prohibition is: "Are you in favor of prohibition?" And the answer should be "Yes" or "No."

Any other interesting questions might be left over for another day. There should be no confusion of issues in the plebiscite. Those who believe that prohibition involves direct taxation have every opportunity of educating the electorate on that point before the vote is taken. A plebiscite which resulted in a majority in favor of prohibition and a majority against direct taxation would be of no practical use to anybody. The right thing to do is to give the Canadian people credit for average intelligence and common sense and to assume that if they vote for prohibition they know and are prepared to take the consequences."

There was a time when the temperance movement was largely the struggle of a few poor victims of the traffic to free themselves. That day has passed. The reform has become a part of the religious faith of this nation, and in spite of all the sophistries and work of the drunkard-makers and their advisors and abettors, the day is not far distant when a state will no sooner license a man to carry on a business to debase the loved ones of the women of this land than it will license a man to steal the jewels from their jewel cases.—John B. Finch.

Said Abraham Lincoln: "All rational men are agreed that intemperance is the greatest evil that afflicts humanity." And so the busi-

ness of producing intemperance must be a nefarious business, and ought to be abolished. That the saloon of to-day is the home of this business nobody denies, and yet it is not only tolerated but legalized, and so in the eyes of the law is just as honorable as a dry goods house or any other like business. Is not this a political monstrosity?

Not only do the poor suffer from intemperance; all classes are its victims. Where goes your tax money? To pay policemen for arresting the products of those drunkard factories, to pay asylums and prisons for holding the wrecks of humanity. Seventy-five to eighty-five per cent. of the inmates of these places are there on account of drink. Business men suffer from its ravages. Enter into that house where the drunken father has left the impress of cold poverty; a broken stove, a few shattered chairs, ragged children, empty cup-board, dirt and filth greet your eyes. Had not that man's money gone to the saloon, it would have gone to the hardware house for a stove, to the tailor for clothes, to the grocer for food, to the carpenter for furniture, to the painter, the butcher, to every honest trader, but not to the saloon.—Rev. Father Doyle.

From the official reports it is shown that the number of licenses of all kinds issued in Ontario in 1874 were 6,185. In 1890 there were 3,523. Each year since then there has been a gradual decrease until in 1897 there were only 3,096. This is, in a sense gratifying, but there are yet nearly 4,000 too many bars in this Province. Since 1890 there has been a most encouraging decrease in the commitments for drunkenness. Here are the figures for each successive year, 4,573, 3,614, 2,736, 2,674, 2,273, 2,237, 1,907, 1,716.

Mr. William H. Orr writes:—"How is it with Toronto and Cambridge, Mass., comparatively speaking? We have 150 hotels to about 200,000 people. Cambridge had about 125 to about 80,000 people. In 1880 Massachusetts adopted a local option law requiring an annual vote. In 1886 Cambridge carried "no license" at the annual election, and it has done the same for twelve successive years by large majorities. From the very first the law has been strictly enforced, and with most happy results. Cambridge is the seat of Harvard University, with 3,674 students in attendance. Before 1886 members of the faculty ordinarily served wine at their receptions to students, and many of the boys got more or less drunk. At one of these receptions given by Professor Parsons of the law school a lot of the students got so beastly drunk that they had to be shut up in a room like a lot of wild animals and kept under guard during the rest of the evening. They had to submit to a stern invasion of their 'personal liberty,' as thousands of 'drunks' have to do in Canada under license. Drinking at Harvard is now said to be practically confined to what are known as social clubs, to which the latest

catalogue shows that not 10 per cent. of the students belong. What has been done in Cambridge in banishing the legal sale of liquor from 125 places ought easily to be done in Toronto or Montreal. The population is much larger and the drink-selling has already been reduced to a very much smaller factor in our make-up than it was in Cambridge. There would be no such 'explosion and recoil against temperance,' as Principal Grant predicts. There would be no such 'explosion and recoil against temperance,' as Principal Grant predicts. There would be nothing of the sort when 83 hotel and 84 shop licenses were cut off in Toronto in 1876; nor when 66 more hotels and 50 more shops were prohibited from selling in 1887; nor when wholesale licenses were cut down, somewhat gradually, it is true, from 39 to 9, their present number; nor when 16 vessel licenses were reduced to 10, then to 3, and finally totally prohibited in 1890. Nor was there any such fanciful results in Portland or Topeka. Ample notice is being given, and will be given, so that these depending for a living upon the evil business can turn their present bars to some account, as stores or offices, or restaurants. And in doing so they will all have a reasonable measure of compensation, in remission of the heavy license fees. Their licenses have cost them the past year in Toronto the large sum of \$75,520.75, of which the Province received \$43,033.51 and the city \$32,487.24."

Great Britain and Ireland have turned out 54,622,706 gallons of whiskey in 1897, over 5,000,000 gallons more than in the previous year. Of this 32,126,238 gallons were consumed in the United Kingdom, and 4,790,181 gallons exported. There are 193 distilleries at work in Scotland, 23 in Ireland, 9 in England and 1 Wales.

### A TYPICAL CRITIC OF PROHIBITION.

A gentleman from western New York was introduced at my house a few weeks ago; he wished he said, for information about Prohibition. I said:

"How long have you been in town?"

"I have been here a week."

"Then you must have seen and heard enough to enable you to form an opinion about it. What do you think of it?"

"I think it is a failure."

"Where are you stopping?"

"At the Palmouth Hotel."

"Do they sell liquor there?"

"No, I tried to get some and could not."

"Did you try anywhere else?"

"I went to the barber's shop and asked if he could tell me where I could get a drink, and he said he did not know any such places."

"Well, you've been here a week and have tried your best to get a drink and have failed. Why do you think Prohibition a failure?"

"One morning I was in the park and saw a drunken man with a bottle and from that I saw that Prohibition was a failure."

"If you had seen in a morning paper an account of the conviction of a thief, would you