



FOR GOD, AND HOME, AND HUMANITY.

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### WORLD'S CONVENTION OF W.C.T.U.

The World's Convention of the Women's Christian Temperance Union was held in Toronto, Canada, last June. In connection with this, the "Toronto Globe" published the following leader:

**W.C.T.U. LEADERS.**

It is a truism that it is often difficult to see the forest for the trees. The average Canadian knows something about the activities of the Women's Christian Temperance Union. The average Canadian knows, for instance, that the leaders of the W.C.T.U. are now in Convention in Toronto, assembled from every corner of the earth. But it is doubtful that the average Canadian ever stops to appraise the work of the W.C.T.U. from the standpoint of larger human history.

The plain fact is that in all the history of mankind few secular organisations have wrought as profound social changes as the W.C.T.U. has effected in the past half-century. For, while the fight against the evils of alcoholism has been waged all down through the centuries, and while many agencies have assisted in the reforms of the past fifty years, it is the W.C.T.U. that has been the driving force behind every notable advance achieved, not in one country, not on this continent alone, but in almost every land and among people of almost every race.

The history of every great movement bears the impress of some human character. The character of the W.C.T.U. still testifies to the inspired genius of Frances Willard, who crystallised women's age-old horror of alcoholism, and grief at the wreckage in alcohol's wake, into an essentially Christian crusade on world-wide lines.

Sometimes Temperance leaders get discouraged at the ebb and flow of the battle against alcohol. Yet the ines-

capable facts prove that in the 43 years since Frances Willard became President of the W.C.T.U. more progress has been made against the organised liquor traffic than in all the previous history of civilisation. One of the greatest nations of the world has utterly abolished legalised liquor sale—a feat which would have been considered utterly impossible a generation ago. Other nations, like our own, have stepped forward, only to slip part way back. But in almost every country in the globe the net per capita consumption of liquor has been drastically decreased by the twin agencies of personal education and political restriction.

In England, for instance, the average consumption of alcohol is almost exactly half the figure for the last year before the war. Education and restriction are doing the work, and in both spheres the W.C.T.U. is supplying leadership and massed strength.

No doubt Toronto was selected as the scene of the present World Convention of the W.C.T.U. partly because of the controversy as to the merits of the liquor-selling system in vogue here. The W.C.T.U. leaders no doubt wished to see the system for themselves—wished to talk with the wives, mothers, sisters, or children of the liquor store patrons.

The "Globe" would be the last to deny that conditions are decidedly better under the system of Government liquor sale than they were in the days of the open bar; but it is equally true that present conditions are much worse than they were during the days of national (as distinguished from partial or provincial) prohibition, when the manufacture and sale of liquor were completely forbidden. For instance, many Ontario families are feeling the pinch of the present economic depression much more keenly than the similar period of 1920-1921. One reason is

that one out of every three families is headed by a liquor permit holder, who spends on the average on liquor 120 dollars per year.

This sum would be sufficient to pay the average family milk bill for three years; the boot and shoe bill for four years; or the egg bill for five years.

Some children in Toronto are to-day being deprived of sufficient milk (as the sales by the dairy companies show) because their families are not quite able to make ends meet. It would have been easier to make ends meet if the 424,000 legalised liquor purchasers in Ontario had not spent on liquor 550 dollars each since the Total Prohibition law was repealed.

In countries where the liquor laws are not as advanced as in Canada, our present system might serve as a temporary W.C.T.U. goal. But in all countries those who face the cold facts can come to no other conclusion than that there are only two ways of coping with the evils of alcoholism: First, by increasing the number of abstainers, by evangelism, education, and moral suasion; second, by abolishing entirely the liquor traffic as speedily as public opinion will permit.

### THE WORLD CONVENTION OF W.C.T.U.

Many of our readers will remember Miss Peach, who was such a welcome visitor at our Nelson Convention. On her return trip to the Homeland she visited Canada, and was present at the World's Convention. She represented New Zealand, and has sent a very charming report, from which we make some extracts.

The reports from different countries was most interesting. In Central America the Organiser has taken over