

ACT, ACT IN THE LIVING PRESENT.

A leaf will show the direction of the wind, a straw the course of the tide or current—two very insignificant things when applied to such mighty forces as wind and water, yet so commonplace as to be unnoticed. The same may be said of many other things around us. Take, for instance, the power and influence of the **trade** in the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors. We see on every hand the effect, but it takes a coal strike, with all its alarming possibilities, to bring home to us what power and influence it exerts even in our little Dominion. Our daily newspapers have drawn attention to the fact that during the past few weeks Beer, in the matter of transit, is preferred to necessities of life, and it is not an uncommon sight to see, when steamers are loading for coastal ports, the wharves and approaches blocked with barrels waiting shipment, to the exclusion of foodstuffs, which have been frequently shut out, but Beer, **never**. Shall this state of things continue? Is it not time some drastic steps were taken to not only prevent a recurrence of the matter referred to, but to compel, as we are advised to do, viz., practise economy all round for the purpose of helping to win the war, and one of the first steps should be to shorten the hours during which the trade is permitted to operate. The licensee holds a license to retail only, and should be on the same footing as every other retailer, whether it be butcher, baker, grocer, or chemist. Never in the history of our Dominion has there been such a golden opportunity for us to show our power, and use our influence in this direction. What is wanted?

A celebrated orator among the ancients being asked what was the first requisite in eloquence, replied, "action"; and being asked what was the second, replied "action"; and being asked what was the third, replied "action." So say we. Action is what we require to spread the principles of Temperance, and give them that ascendancy and moment to which they are entitled. It is action, repeated action; action without a pause, to which, as temperance reformers, we must have recourse, if we would see our cause make headway in spite of every barrier reared against us by stolid indifference, the unyielding ten-

acity of custom, and the concentrated might of interest, appetite, and authority. Our watchword, in its attainment, should be that of the great agitator whose monster meetings have never been surpassed, and are the best illustration of his principle: Agitate! Agitate! Agitate!

POSTERS WARN FRENCH CITI- ZENS AGAINST ALCOHOL.

On the walls of every post office in France is to be hung a poster telling of the evils and dangers of the use of alcoholic beverages. This is being done by the French Society for Action Against Alcoholism, of which M. Raymond Poincare, President of the French Republic, is Honorary President. The poster, which is illustrated by one of the noted artists of France, reads, in part, as follows:—

THE ALARM

To French Women and to Young Frenchmen;

Drink is as much your enemy as Germany.

Since 1870, it has cost France in men and money much more than the present war.

Drink tickles the palate; but it is a real poison that destroys your constitution.

Drinkers age quickly. They lose half their normal life, and fall easy victims to many infirmities and illnesses.

The cordials of your parents reappear in their offspring as great hereditary evils. France owes to cordials a great many mad men and women and consumptives, without counting sufferers from gout, scrofula, rickets, premature softening of the tissues, and most of our criminals.

Drink decreases by two-thirds our national production; it raises the cost of living, and increases poverty.

Mothers, young men, young girls, wives! Up and act against drink in memory of those who have gloriously died or suffered wounds for the Fatherland! You will thus accomplish a mission as grandiose as that of our heroic soldiers.

Dr. Woods Hutchinson says that "you never can quite tell what alcohol has done to you till the post mortem, and then the question will not interest you much."

A FABLE FOR THE TIMES.

THE BELEAGUERED CITY.

There was once a city which, though its arms were victorious, was in dire straits for food.

The General Officer Commanding and the Civil Authorities knew well that it would be re-victualled in a certain number of months, but it was doubtful if they had food enough to last till the re-victualling. So they made strict search to ensure that nothing which could be used for food should be wasted. Soon the General came upon a great store of barley and many barrels of sugar.

"Thank God! we are saved," said he. "Here is enough barley and sugar to ensure our safety. We can hold out now till the re-victualling. This barley, mixed with corn, will make excellent bread, and the sugar will save the children."

"Alas!" said the Civil Authorities, "you are mistaken. All this barley and sugar is going to be turned into Beer. We dare not touch it."

At these words the General, who was a simple soldier, and did not understand politics or agriculture, grew very angry.

"God bless my soul!" said he, "you are not serious! Nobody can be allowed to turn into Beer what might be made into Bread, and so save the city! This is a town of sane people, and not a lunatic asylum!"

"You evidently don't understand the situation," said the Civil Authorities. "Even when it is a question between Beer and Bread, Beer will win."

"What, in war time, and when famine threatens? Nonsense!" said the General.

"You will find it's true, all the same," said the Civil Authorities.

And so it proved. The barley was not used for Bread. The city fell, and the conquerors drank the Beer.

Moral: When Beer comes before Bread, the people perish.—"Christian Commonwealth."

Y.M.C.A. FUND.

Wanganui, £4 15s; S. C. Thomas, 4s 6d; Mrs Parkinson, £4 14s; Mrs Waldolf, £7; Mrs Jopp, 6s; Mrs Findlay, 10s; Mrs Scott, for Nurse Meech, £13. Total £30 9s 6d.

B. L. COWIE.