

improved. In his own district three breweries had been closed and turned to other uses, as furniture or boot factory or tannery, employing between them 4600 people, in place of under 400 employed before in brewing. Hotel accommodation had greatly improved, as to table, quietness, and general comfort, and though it was true prices had gone up, that was the case everywhere as the result of the war. The Canadian Commercial Travellers' Association had officially stated that boarding accommodation was in no way worse. The hotel-keeper himself was taken out of a line of life that was bad for him, and found he could do much better in another occupation. North America had benefited in every way, and so would New Zealand. If the Dominion once adopted Prohibition she would never regret having done so, or wish to go back on it.

After a collection had been taken up, Mr Bayley, Teacher of History and Economics in Winnipeg, addressed the meeting. Taking as his text a pamphlet adorned with the Union Jack, but issued by the Merchants' Protective Association, that really stood for the liquor interest, he dealt with the ways in which the Trade had endeavoured, in British Columbia, to upset the voting for Prohibition by tampering with the soldiers' votes. The voting closed in September in British Columbia, but arrangements were made whereby the soldiers in England and at the Front could vote up to the end of the year. When these votes were taken account of it was found that the Prohibition majority of 6000 gained by the home votes had been wiped out. But as there were many suspicious circumstances connected with these soldiers' votes, the British Columbia Legislature decided to send over a commission of three business men to enquire into the matter. The investigation brought to light many irregular and fraudulent transactions. Of the 5701 alleged votes, apparently 50 were of men who had died before the poll, 689 appeared to have voted in England, though at the time they were in the trenches in France, 583 had apparently voted twice, 39 three times, and a large number seemed to have voted who had never been in the Canadian Army at all. Other glaring instances were given by Mr Bayley of the lax way in which the soldiers' votes had been taken, both in France

and in England; "dry" votes had been suppressed or exchanged for "wet" votes, though the utmost precautions had been taken, and the clearest directions given to ensure a clean and secret ballot. Quantities of cigarettes or of liquor had been used to influence the soldiers' votes; in one case the soldiers who declared they had already voted were told the poll had to be repeated because the first voting papers had been lost through the torpedoing of a boat. These fraudulent practices were absolutely proved on conclusive evidence, and the result of the investigation was to restore the majority for Prohibition, which was thus duly carried. Thus the "Trade" was shown up in its true colours, and we could understand what it would stoop to when fighting for its life.

The last speaker was Mr Simpson, who said he came as a representative of Labour, and on a recent visit to England had had the opportunity of addressing the Labour members of the British Parliament on the prohibition of the Liquor Traffic. He maintained that the workers are not opposed to Prohibition, and that it is a vile slander to say that the working man is the great obstacle to this reform. To disprove this last statement, plebiscites were taken in every part of the United Kingdom, resulting in large majorities for Prohibition. In six districts in England the majority had been over 53,000, in two districts in Wales over 7000, and in twelve districts in Scotland over 32,000. In 1920 the people in Scotland would probably have the power to vote out the Traffic, and he believed they would do it. He instanced Porto Rico, which had recently voted liquor out, though the people were so illiterate that their voting papers had to bear symbols as distinctive marks, a coconut for Prohibition, and a beer bottle for liquor.

He showed that a great change had come in the attitude of Labour towards Prohibition. In Colorado, Denver, and in British Columbia there had been opposition at first from newspapers and from officials, but now they heartily supported it. He did not hold with any attempt to control the Traffic, such as by State ownership, which, according to the principles of true Socialism, he contended should be applied to the means of living, not to that which brought only ruin and misery and death. Enunciating the four standards of value—

real value, exchange value, use value, and sale value—he showed that from the economic standpoint there was no valid argument for the production and use of liquor. Other common articles of trade were to preserve life; this tended to destroy, and liquor required less labour and material for its production than any other article of the same selling value.

Employees connected with bars and breweries he considered were not truly democratic, for they placed their own interests before the interests of the community. They had always opposed reforms, such as woman suffrage and the referendum, because they feared that these would tend towards the overthrow of the Liquor Traffic. The workers as a body desired knowledge, and when science demonstrated to them that alcohol injured the body by robbing the red and white corpuscles in the blood of their power to resist disease, they recognised that it impaired efficiency, and they would have none of it. The movement for Prohibition, he believed, would go on irresistibly. Weak and humble in its beginning, it had gained strength by slow degrees, but now it had become a mighty force, which would eventually prevail.

The proceedings closed with the National Anthem.

THE LATE MRS S. B. WHITE.

Early in June there passed from our midst one of the members of the pioneer W.C.T.U., which was formed in New Plymouth in 1885. When the Union was re-organised in 1895, Mrs White again became a member, and remained in it to the day of her death one of the most sympathetic in the work. Through business and home ties, she was not able to attend the meetings very often, but her purse and keen interest were ever at our service. Remembering, as we do, the strenuous worker her husband was in the Temperance fight, one scarcely expects that every member of a family can soar to the height of ardent self-sacrifice attained by the late Stephen Boothby White in the good of the cause—God bless his memory. Mrs White has borne her affliction of blindness of late years with Christian patience and cheerfulness. We offer our sympathies to the family in their loss.