

The Free Press.

THURSDAY MORNING, June 1, 1882.

Our Political Position.

During the present political contest, the position of the Free Press will be—*as we claim it always has been—* independent. No matter what our personal sympathies may be, the Free Press will not favor either party. We now confess that we have pronounced opinions upon the questions now before the electors in king solution, and would *want* cheerfully enter the contest, but as nearly an equal number of Conservatives and Reformers are subscribers to the Free Press, justice, honor and good faith towards them demand that we refrain from offending or injuring either party, by advocating the principles held by the other. Against this course there is no cause for either party to demur, as each has its own subsidized organ to champion its cause.

Halton's Candidates.

Sheriff McKindsey, the candidate of the Conservative party, is a gentleman who has been in public office in Halton for many years, and the people of the county are no doubt well acquainted with him personally, as well as in public life, and are consequently familiar with his abilities.

Mr. McCrae, the Reform candidate, is a gentleman of considerable experience in public life, having served a term in the Dufferin Parliament, to the entire satisfaction of his party, and would, no doubt, again ably represent the people, should be their choice at the coming election.

The candidates will both visit Acton during the contest and each will then present his intended course of action to the electors. When they will be able to form an opinion as to which would best represent their interests in parliament at Ottawa.

The Scott Act.

A few of our readers have found fault with the Free Press for its strenuous advocacy of the Scott Act and Prohibition, and its continual and bitter attack upon the liquor traffic. But we are conscientiously working for what we honestly consider is the right, and for the best interests of our citizens and humanity in general, and our position may be summed up in the following question:—Are the aggregate results of the drinking system, direct and indirect, in all their variety of effects, of greater benefit than injury to mankind? We hold that they are not. And hence, no matter what arguments may be presented on the other side, we believe it to be the duty of every patriotic citizen to assist in destroying that system. The moment we become convinced that the use of intoxicants is productive of more good than evil, that moment we shall haul down the temperance banner and cease to advocate the cause it represents. But until then, we trust that while strength shall endure, we shall ever raise a voice to plead for human freedom.

Public Improvements.

The reason now advancing and the ratepayers generally are anxious to know what improvements are likely to be made on our streets and sidewalks, and what steps are to be taken this year for the advancement of our little town. The annual report of the committee on streets and sidewalks, recommending improvements and repairs will, we understand, be presented at the meeting of the council next Tuesday evening. The question will no doubt be carefully discussed, and we hope that whatever steps are to be taken, any improvement that may be decided upon will be made at once. There is no use of waiting until the season is so far advanced that winter will be upon us before we can have any of the benefits to be derived from the improvements made. Let the Council decide at once what is to be done and then set about to have the work completed.

The members of the council cannot expect to satisfy the ratepayers by being mere figure heads at the council board; and we do not for a moment imagine that this is their position, but feel confident that each member is anxious to further the interests of the people they represent, and we have no doubt they will prove this by their action in the matter of public improvement at the next or early subsequent meeting.

A Fine Assortment of Garden, Flower & Field Seeds, all Fresh, at J. E. McGarvin's Drug Store.

Election Notes.

The contest must be short, hot, and decisive; let it also be fair and square.

Hon. Edward Drury addressed a very large audience at Milton yesterday afternoon. He was enthusiastically received.

Both parties have truth mingled with error. It requires the heat of the contest as well as time to consume the error and crystallize the truth.

The country is divided on a few great and vastly important questions greatly affecting the future destiny of the Dominion. Each person should decide as to which party he is willing to entrust with the future well-being of the country and cast his ballot accordingly.

The time allowed for the election campaign is so short, that the great mass of the parties will hardly find leisure to appear on many platforms, besides local ones, to explain the situation. We are informed, however, that Hon. Alex. McKeown will likely deliver an address in Acton during the campaign. The Conservatives will no doubt have some prominent politicians here also, but no names are yet announced.

Party Nominations.

HALTON.

At the Conservative convention held at Milton on Friday there was a full representation from all parts of the country. The candidates nominated were:—Mr. W. H. Storey, Acton; Sheriff McKindsey, Milton; Messrs. W. Kearns, Burlington, and D. B. Chisholm, Hamilton. The candidates were all present, with the exception of Mr. Chisholm, and addressed the meeting. At close of the speaking the other candidates resigned in favor of Sheriff McKindsey.

The Reformers of the county met in convention at Milton on Tuesday to select a candidate to contest the coming election. The party in all parts of the country were represented. The nominations were:—Messrs. W. McCrane, Oakville; John White, Milton, and John Webb, Burlington, all of whom were present. The convention was almost unanimous in the selection of Mr. McCrane as their candidate.

SCOTT WELLINGTON.

The Reform convention at Guelph on Tuesday selected Mr. James Louis, of the Mercury, as their standard-bearer in South Wellington at the ensuing elections.

At the Conservative convention at Guelph on Saturday, Mr. James Goldie was chosen as Conservative candidate for South Wellington.

Scott Act vs. License Law.

To the Editor of the Free Press.

DEAR SIR:—As a former resident of the County of Halton, and a reader of your paper, I have watched with considerable interest the agitation in favor of, and the efforts now being made to put into practical working operation, the "Scott Act," in my old county, and here let me remind the friends of temperance that outsiders generally are watching with interest their efforts in this direction, and if the Act be faithfully enforced, and proves a blessing to the people generally—all temperance people believe it will—the friends of Prohibition elsewhere will be stimulated to imitate their noble example in endeavoring to stamp out the curse of the liquor traffic.

I notice, however, that some of the sectional papers are grasping at every little inconvenience or disadvantage that cannot at once be remedied, in order to belittle the act and disparage those who appear to be making most laudable efforts to put it into working shape. But these writers have evidently not stopped to compare the working of the Scott Act with that of the License Act in adjoining counties. Comparisons are said to be odious, which is no doubt the reason they avoid making them. But whilst those opposed to the principles of the Scott Act are endeavoring to write and talk it into disrepute, it will be the constant duty of the friends of the Act to show up the workings of the License Law where it is in force, and on comparing results it is found that the Scott Act reduces drunkenness, immorality and crime, then the friends of temperance will be stimulated to continue their efforts in its behalf. Living as I do where the License Law prevails, and being an earnest advocate of Prohibition, I will, with your permission, from time to time, give you and your readers some of the practical results of the legalized sale of strong drinks, and in doing so I shall only refer to its doings in 1882.

Early in this year a farmer in this township came home at midnight in an

intoxicated state, and finding his family, consisting of a wife and ten children in bed, he became infuriated at their evident disregard of the welfare of the house, and routing them out of bed forced them all out of doors in their night clothes, then taking a hammar and while he flogged up all the doors, and the family had to seek shelter from a neighbor on the adjoining farm. Shortly after, three of his children were seized with diphtheritis—the result no doubt of this night's exposure—and two of them were carried to their graves, a third barely escaping with life.

Another neighbor farmer recently went a few miles to attend a meeting of the municipal council, where he became intoxicated at the expense of the members of the council and other friends whom he met there, and on the way returning home fell out of his buggy, broke his back, and died in a few days thereafter, and so far as I have learned there has been no indignation aroused against the Licensing Act—not against those who supplied him with the liquor which was induced, if not directly, the cause of this man's premature death.

This is then in the practical working of the license system with us. Men and women of Halton, how does the working of the Scott Act compare with this?

MORE ANON.

To the Editor of the Free Press.

DEAR SIR:—I quite agree with you, Mr. editor, that every thing connected with the franchise should be open, openly and above board, and that it is a duty every voter owes to his country to learn as much as possible of a candidate for parliamentary honors before providing his vote to any one, feeling that, as you say, the prosperity of his country may depend on his single vote.

So the ballot box ought to be smashed and the conventions scattered, both having a tendency to cause simple straightforward people to "go it blind."

If any being having a right to vote has no opinion of his own, and can only estimate the highest privilege of a freeman in dollars and cents, let him offer it for sale to the highest bidder in the open market,—then the last dollar wins, as General Grant would say, but let that be the last vote ever such a fellow will have to sell.

Very truly, JAMES NEWTON Limehouse, May 29, 1882.

[We do not coincide with Mr. Newton in "smashing the ballot box," because we believe it has been the means of doing away with the very unnecessary excitement and disorder at one time customary on polling day, and voters who before the introduction of the ballot box were forced to vote against their convictions by intimidation, now use their franchise as they desire, and no one is the wiser.—ED. FREE PRESS.]

WHAT PEOPLE SAY.

That Dominion Day will soon be here.

That the last rain brightened the farmer's face.

That plenty of rain at this season of the year means sleep butter.

That neither political party can afford to despise any man's opinions or prejudices or underestimate his influence.

That the well-informed Conservative who informed the Free Press last week that Hon. Wm. Macdonald would be the Conservative candidate for Halton, was mis-

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