

PROHIBITION IN IOWA.

ITS HISTORY AND ITS OPERATIONS.

Report of an Address delivered in Carlton St Methodist Church, Toronto, by Hon. E. R. Hutchins, Iowa.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—

I hardly need assure you that it is a great pleasure for me to stand under the flag of the Queen and to bring to you the greeting, warm and hearty, from your brothers and sisters in the Hawkeye State of America. The splendid theme which brings you here has bound the citizens of my State together during the past decade so strongly, that they stand now like an irresistible army against the direst curse that ever blotted history—the rum-power. For them—for my people, I congratulate you that there is a deep, and I believe, abiding interest in this great question among you, and I pray, God may speed it into complete victory.

THE HISTORY OF THE STRUGGLE.

I think no part of history is so replete with interest as that of reformations, and no reformation is so free of interest as that of temperance reformations, and I think I am not egotistic when I say that I have looked in vain for a more splendid history in this respect than that written by my own State of Iowa. Let us briefly review it. In 1858 the Legislature of Iowa passed the following law:

"Wherever the words intoxicating liquors occur in this chapter, the same shall be construed to mean alcohol and all spirituous and vinous liquors: *provided*, that nothing herein shall be so construed as to forbid the manufacture and sale of beer, cider from apples, or wine from grapes, currants, as other fruits grown in this State."

Thus the law makers of my State enacted a law which virtually said to our people, "You shall not make drunkards by the manufacture and sale of whiskey, wine, brandy, or gin, but all the drunkards you can make, all the homes you can ruin, and all the souls you can damn by the sale of ale and beer shall be legal and law shall defend you." And for twenty-six years they put in their deadly work. It is true that during these years the stronger liquors were sold illicitly, but the beer and the ale flowed from bar-room after bar room, on every hillside, and in every valley within our borders. What was the result? Drunkenness increased, crime increased, poverty increased, and sorrow in great black clouds hung over the homes of Iowa until her people staggering, under the evil effects of this free beer law, demanded to be heard.

At every session of the General Assembly, petitions and bills were presented for a prohibitory amendment to the Constitution. Finally, in 1879, the General Assembly adopted the following joint resolution, proposing to amend the Constitution so as to prohibit the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors as a beverage within this State.

Be it resolved by the General Assembly of the State of Iowa:

That the following amendment to the Constitution to the State of Iowa be and the same is hereby proposed:

To add, as Section 16 to Article 1 of said Constitution, the following:—

Section 26. No person shall manufacture for sale, or sell or keep for sale, as a beverage, any intoxicating liquors whatever, including ale, wine and beer.

The General Assembly shall by law prescribe regulations for the enforcement of the prohibition herein contained, and shall thereby provide suitable penalties for the violations of the provisions hereof.

Resolved, further, That the foregoing proposed amendment be and is hereby referred to the Legislature to be chosen at the next general election, and that the Secretary of State cause the same to be published for three months previous to the day of said election, as provided by law.

In his message to the Nineteenth General Assembly, Governor Sherman said:—

"In order to afford opportunity for expression, and in compliance with what seemed a very general desire of the people, the dominant political party in Iowa has solemnly declared in favor of submitting to a free vote of the people, the question whether or not a prohibitory amendment shall be engrafted upon the organic law. The last General Assembly passed the resolutions necessary to that end, and as required by the Constitution itself, the same has been referred to the present Legislature, and if there adopted, will be submitted to general vote. I am unequivocally in favor of like action."

There was not a State officer, from the Governor down, who was not publicly pronounced in opposition to the beer traffic, seeing in its results fully as great disasters as in the sale of the stronger intoxicants. Then came the mighty struggle. Then it was that out in the forefront of the battle, way out on the skirmish line, were seen the Good Templars, Finch,

Sobieski, Kanouse, Sibley and others, battling for the homes of Iowa. Upon the one side were the homes of my State with all their sweet and hallowed influences; side by side with them were the schools and educational interests of the State. By them stood the churches and Sabbath schools. The mothers and wives were there. The powers of prayer and song was there. The *brain* and *heart* and *conscience* of Iowa were there. Upon the other side were the 4,500 saloons of the State, with their army of employers and employees. By them were the breweries and distilleries, and surrounding these gathered the throng of gamblers and prostitutes, and the vile and sensual of the State, and into their treasury (already running over with ill-gotten gains), came a ceaseless stream of money from the treasury of the National Whiskey League of America. Thus they fought. I remember once during our unhappy war to have stood upon the quarter deck of one of Admiral Fanagnt's ships as the celebrated naval fight occurred in Mobile bay. It was a bright August morning, and as the great fleet moved towards the enemy's fortresses I noticed at the top of every mast there hung a little bundle no bigger than my fist, and I wondered what they could mean. Slowly we steamed on when the guns from Fort Morgan opened their mouths, and the shrieking shot and shell fell all around us. Then simultaneously—as if by magic—all these little bundles burst seemingly into pieces, and from each of them floated out in God's fresh morning air and sunlight the dear old starry flag of my country. I had never seen such enthusiasm as I saw then. From sailor and soldier, marine and officer alike, there rose one long loud shout for victory. I never saw enthusiasm like it until on the morning of June 28th, 1882—the morning after this fight for the homes of Iowa,—when mothers and fathers whose prayers had for so long gone up to God for victory, when wives, and sisters, and children, old men and matrons, young men and maidens, looked out from eyes filled with anxious tears and saw floating all over Iowa the snow white banner, and on it read IOWA FOR PROHIBITION BY 30,000 MAJORITY. It seemed to me then that that State had but one voice as all over its borders rose Godward "Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

The Governor now issued the following proclamation:—

Whereas, the Eighteenth and Nineteenth General Assemblies of the State of Iowa did, in due form and according to the constitution, agree to add, as section 26, to Article 1 of the Constitution, an amendment in the words following, to wit:—

Section 26, No person shall manufacture for sale, sell, or keep for sale as a beverage any intoxicating liquors whatever, including ale, wine or beer. The General Assembly shall by law prescribe regulations for the enforcement of the prohibition herein contained, and shall thereby provide suitable penalties for violation of the provisions hereof; and

Whereas, Proclamation was made and said amendment was submitted to a vote of the electors of the State at a special election held throughout the State in pursuance of law, on Tuesday, the 27th day of June, 1882; and

Whereas, The official canvass of the result of said election, as made by the Executive Council, acting as a State Board of Canvassers, shows 155,436 votes for the adoption of the amendment, and 125,677 votes against, leaving a majority 29,759 votes for the adoption of the amendment.

Now, therefore, I, Buren R. Sherman, Governor of the State of Iowa, by virtue of the authority vested in me by law, and in the name of the people of Iowa, do hereby proclaim that the aforesaid amendment is adopted, and is a true and valid part of the Constitution of the State of Iowa, whereof all persons will take due notice and govern themselves accordingly.

BUREN R. SHERMAN.

Then beneath the shelter of that victory gathered the mothers with their darling boys clinging to them, thankful for the shelter. There stood fathers with hearts overflowing. The wife stood there joyous in the consciousness of husbands saved, and there gathered reformed ones. There once more, all hiding beneath the peaceful shelter of the long looked for victory. Then came sorrow again by a technical decision of our Supreme Court, the victory was overturned, and the shelter was taken from us, and we were left as before. Then both armies prepared to renew the battle. It became then a political question. The Democratic party met and pronounced in favor of a license. The Republican party met and pronounced in favor of the people's overwhelming voice at the non-partisan election in June, and both parties met with the campaign for the election of members of the Legislature upon their respective platforms. It was a desperate struggle. It was a contest between the home and the saloon, between right and wrong, between God and the devil, and bless His name, God won the victory.

The Legislature convened, and the Governor in his inaugural address said:—

"The duty remains to the law-making power, that the principle thus adopted by the people must be voiced in proper statutory enactments; and I confidently trust that ere your session shall end, the legal remedies will be provided whereby the people may protect themselves from further devastations caused by this unlawful traffic, destructive alike to present and future