

"I stopped short without recommending particularly the prohibitory law. I did so because I was not fully convinced that it was the best remedy to be found; but the law was adopted. After a long time we succeeded in selecting such a force of men as was needed to execute those laws; and now, ladies and gentlemen, I am here to-night especially for the purpose of saying, not from the standpoint of a temperance man, but as a public man, with a full sense of the responsibility which attaches to me from my representative position, that to-day the prohibitory laws of this State, if not a complete success, are a success beyond the fondest anticipation of any friend of temperance. In my opinion, prohibition in Rhode Island is a success, a marvellous success. I felt it incumbent upon me to make that declaration and I desire that it shall go abroad as my sober assertion."

I have here shown you briefly what has been the educating influence of this law in those States where it has been enforced. But there are other instances just as significant though not, perhaps, so well known to the people of this country. I find in a very interesting letter from a certain Mr. Balfour to the right hon. W. E. Gladstone, in which he describes the operation of liquor legislation in Sweden, that many years ago in that country there was absolute free trade in liquors, and that, at the period at which he writes, no less than 175,000 stills were in existence, manufacturing intoxicating liquor of the most ardent description in that country. The letter gives evidence that for a long time the crime, the destitution, the immorality in that country were simply enormous and almost inconceivable. Not long afterwards the Government of that country introduced restrictive measures against the liquor traffic, and we have evidence that almost immediately afterwards not only did the traffic itself diminish, but the crime, and the poverty, and the destitution among the people also decreased. This was not absolute prohibition, but it tended in that direction, and I think the argument is quite clear that, since the people in other respects were just the same during the two periods, that their moral, religious, and secular education was just the same during the two periods, the decrease in the amount of crime was attributable to the decrease in the amount of liquor consumed. I find, in looking over the history of liquor legislation in England, during a great many years indeed, that just in proportion as the traffic was restrained, just in the same proportion did the people benefit by such restrictive legislation; that when the laws were rendered more strict against the traffic in liquor the effects among the people were immediately evident by a decrease in the number of commitments to jail, in the number of crimes of all sorts, and also by a greatly augmented prosperity. I need not say that at no time was this legislation absolutely prohibitive, but my argument is, that just in proportion as the liquor traffic was restricted was there a decrease in its attendant evils. It has often been said that moral suasion in England has accomplished a great deal towards producing a sentiment in favour of prohibition. Sir, I believe moral suasion has done a great deal in that respect, but it is to be noted that it has been constantly attended with increasing legislative restrictions, and I believe that the increased temperance sentiment in England is as much due to the educating influence of this restrictive legislation as it is to moral suasion. But there is another argument which we may fairly adduce. It is very inconsistent for the Government of any country to license people to sell intoxicants and thereby encourage intemperance, while at the same time they pretend to be educating people in favour of temperance. Certainly it is a very ineffectual mode of educating people in favour of temperance by precept, when by practice the Government educate people in favour of intemperance. So long as we may be told that the liquor traffic is perfectly respectable, that it is acknowledged and fostered by the Government, that traffic cannot possibly be considered disreputable, or immoral, or wrong. It is very difficult for us to preach when we do not practise, and I think, Sir, that it is the duty of the representatives of the people to take the first step in practising that which they are endeavouring to preach to the people. Now there

is another objection very often urged against prohibition, and that is that prohibitory legislation cannot succeed, and must necessarily be ineffective, and conducive rather to evil than to good. I believe we have not to go outside the limits of our own country to see the fallacy of this argument. I come from a county in which a prohibitory liquor law has been in existence for a long time, and I can emphatically say that while it has not accomplished all that we desire it should accomplish, while it has not been absolutely and entirely enforced, still it has accomplished so much good that the vast mass of the people in that county would regret exceedingly to see it repealed—nay more, they would strenuously resist and forbid the repeal of that law, and any agitation in favour of such repeal would meet with a most determined opposition. I think I am justified in saying this when I recall the fact that the other day I presented to this House a petition signed by 1,200 or 1,500 of the electors of my county, asking that this resolution, in favour of which I am now speaking, should be passed by this House. If the Dunkin Act, which has been for many years in existence in my county, had been inoperative, if it had produced more evil than good, if it had not, at all events, accomplished some of the good which was expected of it, it would have been quite impossible that so large a number of the most intelligent electors in my county should have asked for the passage of a resolution in favour of prohibition. Instead of that, they would have sent petitions here asking that this resolution be rejected, pointing out how prohibition had failed in its effect. We know that in a large number of counties in this Dominion the Scott Act also has been in force, and although, no doubt, there are conflicting opinions in regard to its action, still the simple fact remains that in every district I know of where this law is in force, the liquor sellers, and those who wish to obtain liquor, together with the manufacturers of such liquor, are opposed to such law, is to me a convincing argument that that law has done harm to the traffic. I believe if we could obtain evidence from those counties where prohibitory laws are in force, the evidence would be overwhelmingly in favour of prohibition. But, Sir, we have, as I said, a little while ago, prohibitory legislation in the North-West Territories, and I will quote again from the Ministerial benches, a witness in regard to its effective operation. I allude to a speech delivered by Sir Charles Tupper, Minister of Railways, last summer, on the same occasion as that on which the speech was delivered by the Finance Minister, to which a few moments ago, I alluded. Sir Charles Tupper was reviewing the Act which he had the honour of proposing and carrying through Parliament. He said:

"I may say, in reference to that other Act which I had the honour of proposing and carrying through Parliament when occupying the position of Minister of Customs, in 1872, an Act that, as he says, excluded the sale, manufacture and use of intoxicating liquors from a territory nearly as large as that of all Europe, the difficulty to be encountered was comparatively simple.

"Mr. RAPEL. Do you say 'use' is in the Act?"

"Sir CHARLES TUPPER. I say use, because the manufacture and sale being prohibited, it followed that the use was prohibited. The authorities appointed Mounted Police to have the law observed. Whenever the smallest portion of intoxicating liquors was discovered in the Territory, they had authority to destroy it there and there, and thus the use was completely and entirely prohibited throughout the extent of 250,000,000 acres of fertile land. Throughout that extent, intoxicating liquors are so completely prohibited, that when the distinguished Lord Dufferin was entertained in that Territory on the occasion of his visit, they were compelled to drink His Lordship's health with a mixture of Perry Davis' Pain Killer."

This evidence, Sir, is, I think, conclusive that at all events a prohibitory law can be enforced by the Government, that a Government wishing to enforce it can practically and effectually carry it out. But, Sir, I have here another witness in respect to this same matter—the enforcement of a prohibitory law, which I think is one of the most conclusive proofs that can possibly be quoted. I allude to what, no doubt, most