

**A DANIEL COME TO JUDGMENT.**

It was round about midnight. The Ontario Legislature was in for an all-night session. Speaker Jamieson was in the chair. Premier Hearst was in command, with his Government supporters ready for any emergency. The third reading of the Hanna liquor license amendments was up. On that night the last chance was offered the Legislature to break the combine of the Government and the liquor traffic, by which all the special privileges of open bars and late selling were continued to all the barrooms of the Province during war times. The fact that Premier Hearst had surrendered to the liquor monopoly was no longer any secret, and the terms had been the talk of the corridors. Even though it might mean one more defeat, the members who would follow the example of King George and heed the warning of Lord Kitchener took for themselves, and offered to their Conservative fellow-members, one more chance to close all barrooms, all liquor stores, and all drinking clubs everywhere during the course of the war. Once more their efforts were defeated by the unanimous vote of the Government and their party majority. Then Mr. Sam Carter of Guelph moved the closing of all liquor-drinking places at 7 o'clock in the evening. That, too, was voted down by the Government, with evident satisfaction. Then he moved 8 o'clock closing. The Government members laughed uproariously. Some of the Ministers threw mocking jibes across the House at the man from Guelph. Others cat-called to him. The Prime Minister smiled blandly as one might at a minstrel show. One Government supporter asked mockingly: "Why not move all the hours together?" At which exquisite humor even the Minister of Education shook with laughter.

But their noisy laughter was like the crackling sound of burning thorns. While they were yet pumping up their hilarity the burly radical from Guelph, with his unmistakable English accent, broke in upon their mirth with a prophet-rebuke:

"You laugh to-night. You mock at our amendments. Our concern for the boys of this country makes great sport for you. But I know, and you know, what is happening this very night in the barrooms of this city and of other cities: our men and boys are being ruined; their money is being wasted: their homes are being destroyed; their lives are being blasted. All our efforts to save our sons and to safeguard our soldiers of the King you greet with jeers and mocking. I warn you and your Government that I will go through this Province and I will tell the people, no matter what their party, that you sneered when we tried to shut the bars; that when we moved to cut down the barroom hours you mocked as you mocked a moment ago. Sir, this accursed liquor business has damned one Government in Ontario, and I warn you it will damn yours too."

The gayety died out of the Government faces. Even the loudest of the liquor stand-bys forgot to laugh. It was as though a Daniel had come to judgment: as though an Amos had come back from among the herdmen of Tekoa: as though a Nathan blazed again, "Thou art the man."

And when the people of Ontario next speak it may be so.

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