

[1887?]

Remarks By Mr. Southgate.

Fellow-Citizens:-

I feel that you have already honored me quite enough in electing me to this honorable position, in the duties of which I have been engaged. As I think our Committee will come out very soon I did not think that I would risk myself before you. But Fellow-Citizens it grieves me very much that such a state of affairs is necessary as should occasion the calling of this meeting tonight. In 1886, on the 4th of June, 2 days previous to the election, I had very high hopes that we, the people of Durham, would have prohibition. We were defeated. That is our hopes and our aims were defeated; but I believe, Fellow-Citizens, that the cause was not defeated. On the 4th day of June, 1887, we all met here, and I think we had high hopes of success. I remember that night with a great deal of pleasure, and I pledge you my word that I felt that night in my heart, that if the people of Durham on the following Monday voted for prohibition, that we would have prohibition. I could see growing upon those graves of '86, graves of lost hopes, of faded ambitions- I thought in June '87 that the flowers were blooming and budding with the magic of a resurrection morn. You can understand then my Fellow-Citizens, how my heart was stirred, and how my spirit was crushed, and how my hopes were blasted, when, a few short days ago the news spread upon our streets that license upon top of license had been granted to retail wine and beer in our streets. And I was not the only man. Men of all classes and of all conditions were dumfounded. They could'nt explain it. And well they could not. I doubt whether this meeting here tonight can

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explain it. But it is done. The saloons are open, wine and beer are being sold, and our victory, which we thought we had, appears to be defeat. Now, Fellow-Citizens, I cannot trust myself to go into an explanation, or to express an opinion about the whys and wherefores of this action- why it was done, how it was done, the reason for it- but I tell you Fellow-Citizens that I am here tonight to unite my voice with yours in condemning that action, in expressing our sincere regret at the action, and if possible adopt some means whereby we can wipe out these evils, and re-instate the Honorable Commissioners of this County in the good opinion of our citizens. I tell you, my friends that it has come to pass in the history of our country when we must have some safeguards, and when every honest man must pay ~~xxxxxxx~~ proper respect to those safeguards; and the great safe-guard of this country today, in my judgement, is the respect of the law which dwells in the hearts of the people. Take out of the people ~~that~~ willingness and ~~that~~ desire which they should have to support and sustain the law of the land, and your life, and your property is at once hazarded, your institutions are gone, and you never can enjoy that liberty and that freedom of which America boasts as compared with every other nation of the world. You never can enjoy that liberty which has been purchased at a cost of the blood of our forefathers for over 100 years. Now it is no mean heritage that you and I enjoy today. You and I cannot count the cost of what we enjoy today as freemen.

But I see that the Committee is returning, and I will desist.

(Applause.)