

the enquiry, "Well, if I gather my own class, can I have a place to teach them in?" Permission given, he turned up the following Sunday with 14 boys he had gathered off the streets, and had the place to teach them in been refused there is no doubt he would have found a way through that difficulty also. At one time he entertained thoughts of entering the ministry, but though the idea was finally abandoned, he always thanked God for the religious influences which moulded his life.

He had only a comparatively brief public school education, but he had a passion for reading, and his evenings, after he left school, were devoted to reading Carlyle, Ruskin, Emerson, and works on social and political history and economy, while Lowell, Tennyson, Wendell Holmes, and Whittier laid hold of him, and he became saturated with their poetry and sentiment. Even in the days when he was looked upon as a "man of one idea," he delighted his friends, and often confounded his opponents, by the sudden revelation of a remarkably wide range of knowledge and ideas, and all through his early years, at church meetings and literary societies he gave evidence of his coming powers.

As a lad of fourteen he entered the employ of Heywood and Co., more than once giving evidence of his unflinching integrity and high principles. He rose to the position of manager, leaving in 1895 to go into business for himself, thereby securing greater freedom for political and temperance work. Already he was well before the public notice. His clear-sightedness showed him that the abolition of the liquor bar was the only effectual remedy for drunkenness, with its attendant moral and physical ills; so, enlisting the co-operation and help of the Rev. L. M. Isitt, who had lately been appointed to the charge of the Sydenham Wesleyan Church, he organised the campaign which resulted, after a two years' fierce struggle, in the election, by the ratepayers, of the famous Sydenham Licensing Committee, pledged to refuse every license in their district. The election of these five men—Rev. L. M. Isitt, Messrs G. J. Smith, W. J. Rudd, and R. Beatty—in April, 1891, is one of the notable incidents in New Zealand history, as from it sprang most of our licensing legislation which has attracted world-

wide attention, for the decisions of the Supreme Court and Appeal Court, upon a legal technicality, quashed their decision, ousted the Committee, left them with £600 costs to pay, and started the campaign for the Local Option vote, so magnificently conducted by the Rev. L. M. Isitt throughout the colony. Those were stirring times.

Sydenham has the honour of forming the first Prohibition League in New Zealand, with T. E. Taylor as Secretary, and L. M. Isitt as President. There, too, "The Prohibitionist" was born, the party's powerful paper, which, under that name and that of "The Vanguard," has, from that day to this, so ably and consistently advocated the cause of temperance and the people's right.

Alongside the demand for Local Option raged the agitation for Woman's Suffrage, ably conducted by Mrs Sheppard under the auspices of the Women's Christian Temperance Union. For this reform Mr Taylor was a stalwart champion. He never had to be persuaded that women should be allowed to take their place in the civic and political life of their country! He always held that God meant women to be a help-mate to man, first at the hearthstone, and afterwards in all the relationships of life—at the ballot box, at the Council table, on our Boards, and in the councils of the nation among its legislators.

So splendidly and strenuously were these reforms advocated and striven for, that 1893 saw them both passed into law, though both Acts were marred by injustice—the Woman's Suffrage Act by the clause which debar women from Parliament, and the Local Option Act by the iniquitous three-fifths majority, two injustices which obtain to this day.

The great campaign for the Local Option vote placed Mr T. E. Taylor among the foremost leaders of the Temperance movement. He was then a member of the Sydenham Borough Council, a position he filled for six years, and an untiring worker and brilliant speaker for the Prohibition cause. In 1896 began his political career. In January of that year he offered himself as a candidate for Parliamentary honours at a bye-election held in Christchurch the following month. So intimately and strenuously had he laboured for tem-

perance and prohibition reforms that people, who knew little of him personally, were not disposed to regard him as likely to make his mark in this field, but his friends thought otherwise, and their opinion was fully justified when he opened the battle at the Opera House with a speech that won high praise and admiration,—broad, progressive, and thoroughly well informed. Rarely has a new man displayed such a grasp of public questions, and such ability to state them. It was so progressive, so earnest, so attractive a speech that it at once concentrated all the opposition of politicians, the liquor ring, and, to their shame be it said, of the newspapers on this Radical Independent. The Government candidate was R. M. Taylor, while the Conservatives ran Mr Chas. Lewis. The three strongest members of the Ministry, the Premier (Mr Seddon), the Minister of Lands (Mr J. McKenzie), and the Colonial Treasurer (Mr Joseph Ward) came to Christchurch to take part in the fight, which resolved itself into a ceaseless campaign against Mr Taylor, rather than an advocacy of the Government candidate. The result was the return of Mr Lewis with 4714 votes, Mr T. E. Taylor second with 4302, and the Government man last with 3916. In the following August he fought the famous Coker Hotel libel case, which he practically won. He fought the battle not for himself, but for the party, and the case greatly added to his influence and popularity. The general election took place at the end of the year, when he again contested the seat, and was successful, Messrs Lewis, G. J. Smith, and T. E. Taylor being returned as the Christchurch members. By way of comment on the bye-election, it is interesting to note that on this occasion R. M. Taylor polled only 555 votes, T. E. Taylor polling 5443. To those of us who were privileged to take part in those great campaigns, the temptation is very great to linger over them, but we can only say that the joy and enthusiasm that was ours over the victory achieved by our great and well-loved leader, will be an abiding memory with us while memory lasts.

His entrance into Parliament was immediately signalled by his attack on the Government with regard to the Police Force. During the debate on the Address in Reply, he delivered such a powerful indictment of the ad-