



Chapter Five Alcoholism – Prohibition

Drink's Triple Trail

Drink's World, Drink's Work, Drink's Woe

From The War Cry (Toronto), February 25, 1899.

Drink's World

Its paths, inlaid with snare and ruin, run from the highest and most cultured places of our most enlightened lands, down through the darkest alleys of poverty and pauperism and into the lowest vaults of infamy and vice. There is no thoroughfare so wide, no hut so desolate, no cave so hidden, no nation so fair, no strand so laden with disastrous wreck, but where the heavy tread of this monster, Drink, with either to wail of destruction in its tramp, or with its venomous sting hidden by its deluding glare, has been heard in its funeral march.

It dwells in marble halls. The most gorgeous tapestry bedecks its chambers. The walls through which it glides are spacious and imposing. It is no stranger of the art of the most beautiful, the most elaborate skill. The floors over which its stealthy feet glide are often marble, the ceilings of gilded fretwork, the frescoed walls upon which it casts its shadows are of mahogany and satinwood. Its blazing gas-jets in globes of dainty hues hang from massive brackets. Its ear is accustomed to the sweetest strains of most cultured music, into which it will only too surely introduce all the dirges of minor keys. Its envious eye rests with ravishing greed upon the beauteous form of fairest creature, and the most elegant spread of glorious nature and most artistic skill displayed in picture, with thirst to cast its blight on all.

Infanticide and Suicide

A lady, extravagantly dressed, holding by the hand a sweet little boy of some six years, also displaying all taste and plenty in his attire, accompanied by a nurse with a fair baby of six months



in her arms, attended one of my more select meetings in the Old Country. She seemed to take something of a fancy to me, and waited to speak to me at the conclusion of the meeting. I felt some affinity with her – perhaps it was the hidden sorrow, of which I knew nothing, drew in an imperceptible way upon my sympathy. But we talked happily over a cup of tea, in the vestry; I kissed the children, prayed with them and blessed them.

We met occasionally after this. I was to have gone to her home, but never found the time. She frequently sent the little boy to see me, and the only thing that impressed me strangely was when asking of his father, the nurse became very agitated, and would change the conversation. One night, at the conclusion of a large meeting, to my surprise, I found the nurse sitting in the lobby, with a face white as death. I asked why she did not come into the meeting, and enquired the reason of her being out with the boy at such a late hour; she burst into bitter wailing; I could get no response to my questions. Turning to the boy, I asked if his mother was sick. He replied:

“No! Nurse cries because mother has gone away with baby.”

Then the girl, burying her head in her hands said: “Oh! My mistress has gone to jail.”

“To jail?” I gasped.

“Yes! She has killed the baby; she put laudanum in its milk by mistake. She was drunk.”

A letter afterwards told me she committed suicide. Yes! They fall as a star from the very heavens – to a cinder in hell.

But drink stays not there. It sits at the hearth of the humbler home; it gazes with hideous smile upon the honest toil for bread; It creeps upstairs; it glitters in the table in the little festivities of the happy home, lurking behind the damnable argument of the harmlessness of moderate drinking, while with hungering designs it lays its plans with careful calculation as to the little time it will take to snatch the pretty blue frock from the little form, and the pretty pink flush from the little cheek, the good warm boots from the little feet, the carpet from the floor, and the clock



from the shelf; the gladness from the mother's eye, and the honor from the father's heart; the bread from the cupboard, and the fire from the grate.

But drink stays not there! Through the courts and alleys its blood-besmeared feet hasten with a rapidity only lent to absolute and complete destruction; down into the cellars, up into the garrets; hid away in sheds; in any and every hole that can shelter want and woe are to be found crawling; standing, sitting; leaning, kneeling, treading, the slaves and victims of this dark passion – Drink! Their faces are drawn with agony; their reasons distorted with crime; their names are blighted with shame; their homes are gone; their characters are gone -- all over the counter for beer, all into the hotel-keeper's till, all into the brewer's pocket.

But Drink stays not here. It is the shadow behind the garish footlights of the stage. It is the demon glare thrown into the brilliancy of the ballroom. It is the frenzied fascination of the gambling-table. Its playthings are the fair babes of our cradles; its merriment the tears of our wronged and bereaved; its sport the haunted consciences of wretched man, and the delirious wanderings of maddened minds; its nature the blood of its victims.

Its sky is blackened with the pall of death; its rivers a multitude of fallen tears; its atmosphere thickened with the wail of suffering. Drink is a Dragon thirsting for human blood! It is a Monster with a rabid lust for human life! It is a Pestilence which paralyzes the will, bewilders the brain! It is a Flame, scorching and withering all it touches! It is the most active, the most powerful, the most successful enemy of the soul, for it is not one sin, it is all! Crushing the old, cursing the young, and blighting even the children.

The Demon of Drink says with Napoleon: "Give me the children, and I will conquer the world."

Drink's Work

It is gradual. Almost all drunkards were once moderate drinkers. There has never been known a man who has intended to be mastered by this power. The supposed harmlessness of the one glass has been the damnation of body and soul for a thousand times ten thousand men. Oh, this tasting of father's glass with the children, this having it in the cupboard, this countenancing and



patronizing in part of what on the whole is a worldwide traffic of destruction, has just been the lighting of fires which have consumed three parts of earth's best and brightest.

Of all arguments which to my mind are the most base in their gross distortions of natural reason, their contradiction of all conscience-dictates, an annihilation of all manly honor, are those which would plead in favor of drink in moderation, as though the fact of taking the death-drug in small quantities could change its nature – which nature is restless, untiring pursuit until all is devoured and destroyed.

Is hell heaven, because hell
In little drops be given?

Oh, the thousands of young men who start with no greater desire or intention than to be in the fashion. They take the first glass in the high-class hotels of the city, but they have linked hands with the monster; the grasp becomes tighter and tighter, until the touch of the friend is lost in the grip of the fiend. Listen! The clock strikes twelve! It is the death-knell of a soul; the gas-jets intermingle their lights with the bleared glare of the youth; the flush of his cheek is the breath of eternal woe. The saloon-keeper cuffs him, waking him from his drunken slumber, says it is time to close, throws him out. He's down. He's damned! He began a moderate drinker in a first-class hotel. He finishes his dissipation and inveterate drunkard in the lowest saloon.

Banish the drink both in small and great quantities! Banish it from your homes, from your children, from your wives, from your tables, from your cities, and, God helping you, from this our fair country.

Five Years' Work

One of my officers was driving through one of the border streets in a city of this country.

Attention was drawn to a tall, slight figure on the sidewalk; a woman, who wore widows' weeds; her attire gave evidence of a continual effort to retain neatness. The skirt was brushed threadbare, the boots were patched, the little bonnet was extremely worn. The figure halted,



gave a quick look round, and holding up her shawl to prevent all possible detection, began to gnaw away at the frozen bread.

The officer drew up the rig and sprang to her side saying, "You are hungry and in want. Can I help you?"

Her story was soon told. What a happy home, what a loving husband, what a beautiful baby she had once! "My lover, my sweetheart, my husband, my protector, my supporter, and my baby all carried away by the drink, sir — in five short years."

My honored and sainted mother, in her writings, speaks about the drink traffic as follows:

But not only is abstinence valuable, nay, indispensable, in order to preserve those rescued out of the power of this great destroyer, but it is equally valuable to prevent others from falling into it.

We all profess to believe that prevention is better than cure. Seeing, then, that strong drink is proved to be the most dangerous foe to perseverance in righteousness, and the most potent cause of declension, inconsistency and apostasy, ought not Christians to strive, both by example and precept, to warn the young, the weak and the inexperienced from touching it?

Can any man answer for the consequences of putting a bottle to his neighbor's mouth — be it ever such a small one, or ever such a genteel one? God has recorded His curse against the man who does this, and thousands of hoary-haired parents, broken-hearted wives and weeping, blighted children groan their "Amen" to the dreadful sentence.

Perchance there are some men who can take these drinks in what they call moderation, and suffer no visible injury; nevertheless, let that man beware who touches that which God cursed, for there are injuries invisible more to be dreaded than all the plagues of Egypt!

It is complete! I was just about ready to leave a city lately visited by me, when a lady stepping from a carriage was ushered into my room. Her countenance was of exceptional beauty, her



apparel was of costly worth, her speech denoted education and refinement. Putting out her hand she said, "My apology for taking up your time, Miss Booth. It was my anxiety to speak to the only woman that has ever made me cry, and this I did all through your address last night." A few minutes talk revealed the reason of the hot tears referred to.

The story ran much on all those things which used to be: loving home, beautiful nursery, the mother's care, the gentle training, the happy marriage and then, always having been a moderate drinker, drink in greater quantities was the only receipt for relief from the grief and unexpected sorrow. And with baited breath and staring eye, she whispered, "It is the drink, Miss Booth! It has driven my husband from me, locked up my children in the convent, spent my fortune; it has shut the doors of my home, blasted my character, robbed my virtue – honor with which none can part without bitter agony, and turns it to craft and falsehood; puts its hand down on beauty and so mars, scars, tears and hacks until no trace of loveliness can be found.

It stays not at taking the bloom from the cheek, but goes on until the death breezes fan it; it stays not at bent back, round shoulders, curved spine, and fractured limbs, but goes on until it lays the body in the grave. Complete in its ruin of body, soul and mind!

I knew of a garret absolutely empty, but for the suffering from a drunken woman and a few rags.

The birth of the baby boy that morning brought with it no maternal affection, but only the fervent prayer that it would die; not a rag was prepared for the unwelcome mite; its first bath was in the boiler, and its first covering part of an old garment torn from the back of his littler sister. However, the poor little babe persisted in living, in spite of these unwelcome circumstances, and nine days afterwards appeared with its mother in the county court. The fact of the matter was that all the furniture had gone to meet the infuriated demands of the unpaid landlord, but did not nearly satisfy the amount due.

"How can you pay this account?" asked the judge of the woman. Diving her hands underneath the tattered shawl which covered her otherwise bare shoulders, she drew forth her naked babe, and holding it forth at her bony arm's length said, "You can take this if you like!"



The woman afterwards was heard to sob out in the ears of her dark world's one friend, "I was so mad that I hardly knew what I was doin'."

Drink's Woe

Who can tell its story? What pen could write its tale? What heart could cry the griefs of drink and woe?

Look at this procession if we can. Let God touch our imagination and help us to do so.

Their tread is ever languid, their faces never smile; their hearts are ever bleeding. Each Day for them but brings new curses; new brutality, new hunger, new fear, and new dread.

If they pray, then with every awakening morning and every setting sun they ask God, the Creator, by pity of the sorrow, to number them with the dead.

A crowded court in Toronto – this city – in the prisoner's box stands a forlorn and desperate looking woman, a creature to whom one blushes to give the name of a woman.

No small consternation is caused by a police official carrying over a chair to place on the steps where the witnesses stand.

The tiny hand clinging to the strong fingers of a stalwart constable is that of a baby witness, only four years old, whose little frail form is lifted up on the chair. You might have thought the sunlight concentrated all its golden glory in the ringlets of the hair, the skin was of snowy complexion, the features pinched with want, but correctly marked, and the eyes two large windows for the soul to look through.

Little Maggie was her name; she was the child of the woman in the prisoner's dock. She had been swung round and round by the hair, in her mother's drunken rage, and was brought to show the wounds, a proof of the story.



"Did your mother do this?" the child was asked. The lips parted to the answer in the affirmative, when the little face was lifted to the pitiable object opposite her. Seeing the woman standing between two big policemen, she took in her mother's woeful position, and lifting her large eyes to the judge with a trembling quiver in the baby's lips and the wound plainly showing on her head, she said, "No sir; my mother never did it, my mother never did it!"

What a revision of God's living purpose! A four-year old baby shielding and pleading for its mother!

This is not in a heathen land: this is on our doorstep; it runs through our streets. They are our own fair girls and our brave sons who sink beneath this dark tide, and are drawn into the vortex of this whirlpool!

Do I believe it? Yes, not only because I've heard so much of it, but because I've seen so much of it.

Why, only just near my own office, a little time back in this beautiful city, a father killed his own son by driving the mother's scissors into his heart. He was drunk. When sober, and told what he had done, he lost his reason with grief. Does it not behoove us, as Christian men and women, should it not compel our churches where the word of God is upheld, where righteousness is contended for, and solace of all grief proclaimed, should it not constrain us as a Christian country to arise, and equipping ourselves with the weapons of truth and righteousness with irresistible perseverance, strike out at the enemy in season and out of season, with a force which springs from the knowledge of this sin, and from the accumulated wrongs, oppressions, griefs, sorrows, tears of Drink's woe?

Strike out at Drink, this giant foe of virtue and peace with a hand that will not stay, and a heart that will not relent, and feet that will not halt until we have driven the enemy without our gates, and our land stands an example of soberness and happiness in the front rank of all the countries of the world.



Shall America Go Back?

Excerpted from a thirty-page pamphlet containing an address read before the National Convention of Women's and Christian Temperance Union of Philadelphia, 1922.

Published by National headquarters (New York), (n.d.)

The Temperance Revolution

We are here today to mingle our voices in the shout of victory over what will ever be the world's greatest moral triumph. But we are still upon the field, not with our swords in their scabbards, but drawn to drive the remainder of the enemy beyond our gates, and to keep them there.

The enemy's line has, indeed, crumbled, and his citadel has been captured, but the discredited outlaw still essays a guerilla warfare, and I am quite sure that your Convention has resulted in a renewal of purpose to attack, and then attack again, until the outlaw, drink, with all its nefarious traffic, is denied toleration by men and women wherever reason and truth and feeling prevail.

This question, "Shall America Go Back?" suggests an investigation of the progress of Prohibition. I am aware that from a technical standpoint the phrase may be open to criticism, because the very word Prohibition is a word of finality. But I must hold to the phrase all the same, and, if any grammatical rule is violated it must be regarded as a casualty in the interests of truth (as one of our homespun lectures put it, "It may not be elegant, but it illustrates"). For we insist that the prohibition of intoxicating liquors in the United States has been, and is, progressive.

It has been progressive in its on sweep through the years. Review invites one's attention at a time like this.

Away back in the 1840s Abraham Lincoln wrote:

Of our political revolution of '76 we are all justly proud. In it was the germ which vegetated, and still is to grow and expand into the universal liberty of mankind.



Turn now the temperance revolution. In it we shall find a stronger bondage broken, a viler slavery manumitted, a greater tyrant deposed; in it more of a want supplied, more disease healed, more sorrow assuaged; by it no orphans starving, no widows weeping; by it none wounded in feeling, none injured in interest.

And when the victory shall be complete, when there shalt be neither a slave nor a drunkard only then can we truly claim to be the birthplace and the cradle of both these revolutions that shall have ended in that victory!

I feel Abraham Lincoln's spirit is here this afternoon.

Shall America Go Back?

But it has been a tedious, tortuous war progression from Lincoln's time to this, a battle to the death, over and over again, with an enemy armed to the teeth with ample funds and cunning sophistries. But the blessing of an all-watchful and all-conquering Jehovah hovered over the battlefield, the entreaties of mothers encamped around it, and the tears of the children baptized it. Through the long years public sentiment, created and nurtured by the noblest hearts and the most intellectual minds, has grown ripened until at last the soil that gave birth to such immortals as Abraham Lincoln, Henry Ward Beecher, Charles Finney, John B. Gough, Dwight L. Moody and Frances Willard could no longer tolerate this monstrous wrong, and one glad morning America spread her starry banner to a new sun of liberty, and by constitutional Amendment repudiated the hitherto legalized iniquity.

Every step of the way has been contested. Ever since December, 1917, when Congress favorably acted upon the resolution recommending the Eighteenth Amendment, powerful and sleepless foes have sought to make it ineffective. Despite this organized and persistent opposition, one by one the States fell in line until but little over a year later the thirty-sixth state ratified the resolution, and so made possible the President's proclamation.



Supposed Case against Prohibition

Now our advisories declare they have a case against Prohibition. In the indictment there are several counts.

First, they say: "Prohibition was surreptitiously secured."

They say that the Congressional resolution was passed and its ratification secured while "the boys" were overseas, and that but for this fact Prohibition never would have been possible. While this allegation, because of its repetition and the somewhat widespread belief that it has been given, has been frequently and completely denied, permit me to cite the facts, with which many may not be familiar.

Who adopted Prohibition? The people themselves through their representatives in Congress and State legislatures. IN Congress 347 votes were cast for submitting the eighteenth Amendment to the State Legislatures for ratification and 148 against. In the forty-six states out of the forty-eight which ratified the Amendment 5,084 votes were cast in the State legislatures for ratification and 1,263 against it. The total vote was seventy-nine percent for ratification and twenty one percent against.

You can impress the whole situation on your mind by remembering that Prohibition was "put over" by only forty-six of the forty-eight states in the Union with only ninety-eight percent of the population and only ninety-nine and three-fourths percent of the area of the United States. To sum up, only two small states – Connecticut and Rhode Island – refused to ratify. Prohibition could have been no surprise to the country, for thirty-three states were dry by state enactment and eighty-seven and eight-tenths percent of the area and sixty and seven-tenths percent of the population were under license law before the Eighteenth Amendment went into effect. How ridiculous to say that it was secured by surreptitious means!

Drink Always a Lawbreaker



The second count in this indictment is: "Prohibition does not prohibit."

It is rather strange that our enemies blow both hot and cold. We hear much about the drastic nature of the Stead Act. It seems to prohibit overmuch, and our friends say: "We would be satisfied if they would allow light wines and beers." Then with almost the same breath they say: "Prohibition does not prohibit." If it doesn't, then the "Wets" are well served. But they know it does, and that every time they slake their thirst with the forbidden beverage they are breaking the law. This, in the drinkers' realm, may not be looked upon as particularly bad, but then drink is always true to form, and in the days when it was legalized its devotees were the most flagrant breakers of the law in the land.

Drink will not be regulated. Its law-breaking proclivities are not new, but are as old as history. As a breaker of the law; be it laws of nature or laws of nations, laws of health or laws of home, laws of mind or laws of morals, the drink stands condemned, the red-handed criminal, the greatest law breaker in the land. So it is no new role for its apologists to assume when they cry: "Prohibition does not prohibit!"

That there are violations of the law all admit, but to cite the fact as an argument against the Prohibition Law is as futile as it would be to demand the cancellation of the whole decalogue because of repeated infraction of that law which is fundamental to all jurisprudence. It would be about as sensible to engage in an effort to expunge the Ten Commandments from the Book of God because of their non-fulfillment in the lives of men as it is to advance the theory that the Prohibition Law should be repealed because it does not prohibit.

Because the laws against arson, theft and murder are being violated, shall we abandon these laws and their penalties? Certainly not; and by the same token the Eighteenth Amendment and its supporting law must stand.

The True Test

The third count in this indictment is; "You cannot by law make men moral."



This statement cannot survive the acid test. Its reasoning is fallacious and its implications untrue.

I must remind our friends that the question is not simply and only one of morals. That phase of the matter, I admit, to Salvationists looms up with singular distinctness. We hold that it is positively wicked to take God's good grain, capable of sustaining the lives of multitudes who are now but, in the process of waste, run it into an unmitigated curse. No proprietary rights will absolve any from the moral obloquy of such conduct. To trade in that deceptive and destructive and destructive thing, apart from anything that statutory law may say, has long been regarded as of doubtful ethics. The beverage use of alcohol has proved with mathematical precision that is a demoralizing and dehumanizing agent.

Oh, yes! It is a moral question, but not only so. It is also an economic question, a sociological question, a political question, a scientific question, and startlingly these days it has been demonstrated to be an international question. So it comes to pass that the economist, the scientist, the statesman, the sociologist and the manufacturer have all joined with the moralist in the enunciation of this law that was graven by the hand of God in the constitution of human life.

The statement that morality is divorced from law is not true. Moral conduct is the aim and end of law. That is the meaning of law. Its enactment and administration have good conduct for their objective, and while conduct may at times be governed by nobler considerations than fear of penalty, law is still universally recognized as necessary to the existence of well-ordered society.

When people say: "You can't legislate people into good morals," I reply: Into the whole fabric of our nation's law is woven the ethical element, and any law that violates a correct moral standard is foredoomed to dishonor and its repeal is certain. By this test the old liquor-license laws were tried and condemned and ultimately superseded, and I feel quite happy in the realization that the same searching trial will be applied to the new, for it will but reveal to the whole world the soundness of our present legislative position. Meanwhile depopulated prisons and rebuilt homes witness to the fallacy of this argument advanced against Prohibition.

Liberty Versus Anarchy



The fourth indictment is: "Prohibition invades personal liberty."

Into this supposed tower of refuge probably more of our opponents run than any other, and from its flimsy ramparts they fling the cry: "Prohibition invades our personal liberty by prescribing what we shall eat and what we shall drink; and we deny any man's right to prescribe our plum pudding or our exhilarating cup."

The principle which enters into the Prohibition Law is no more nor no less than that which is basic to the restraints of all law. No man objects to the denial of his liberty to steal; anyway, he doesn't object to the curtailment of his neighbor's liberty in this direction; therefore he should intelligently accept the application of this same principle to that house-breaking, home-destroying, child-abusing, business-wrecking thief, Alcohol.

Liberty, true liberty, is a priceless heritage, but no man's liberty comprehends a right to strike another down, not even in that other is his own child. IN the exercise of society's right to protect itself, the nation came to an appraisal of the monstrous wrong that was perpetrated upon it by its permission of the drink traffic. Progress toward the evaluation was slow and tedious, but the final appraisal was correct; correct politically, correct economically, correct scientifically, correct socially, and correct morally.

With the soul of the people awake to this solemn fact, there was no consistent course possible but for the nation to cleanse its hands forever from the cruel partnership that had dishonored it, and refuse longer to traffic in homes, in happiness, in health, in the very lives of its children. For this holy purpose our nation flung her starry pen across the Federal books and by strictly constitutional means wrote into the organic law of the land that which every officer and every citizen pledged to support. In the name of all civilization I declare that there is no liberty apart from law. There is but one alternative, anarchy.

What about the enforcement of law?



That splendid American, the Honorable Charles E. Hughes, Secretary of State, says; "Everybody is ready to sustain the law he likes. That is not in the proper sense respect for law and order. The test of respect for law is where the law is upheld even though it hurts."

Law must be, and it must be obeyed. Yet there are those who argue that breach of Prohibition Law is excusable. Some say it is laudable, while others are defiant and make it their business in life to forward their sinister work of doing those things that the law prohibits. There are others that go still farther; in their wild thirst for gain the lives of their victims count not, and murder is added to fraud, when they trade upon the weakness of their fellows and for fabulous prices sell deadly poison.

How sorrowful it is that opposition to Prohibition has united, as in a great dragnet, the good and the bad, so that the clean and respected citizen and the professional drink-exploiter are cogitating and cooperating together for the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment! But "they shall not pass."

The prohibition Law sprang from the soil and the soul. It germinated in remote and sacred places where mothers pray and fathers think. The country church, the country W.C.T.U., the country home and school took the lead, the West far in advance of the East. Long and wearisome has been the struggle. Shall those who fought and gained it ever go back? "Kansas," William Allen White says, "and states of her tradition and her kind would no more lose their forty years' fight for Prohibition than they would lose their four years' fight against slavery."

The Salvation Army and the Drink

I stand here today as a leader of a movement that, in its attitude toward the drink evil, has never known a hesitating moment. At the inception of the Salvation Army, over half a century ago, Prohibition was in its infancy and there was then no condemnation of moderate drinkers. A religious movement, with total abstinence as a condition of membership, was both novel and unpopular.



But the die was cast, for our Founder, my father, saw this was the curse that bound the poor man as with an iron chain to his poverty, and was both the forerunner and supporter of the worst crimes, Proscription was the only course, and that course, without a single exception, has been followed. Because of this we stand today the greatest temperance movement on the face of the earth. The Army has a right to voice its convictions and to testify to its experiences concerning intoxicating liquor, for its hands are clean!

It will be expected that I should say something as regards the immediate benefits of Prohibition as seen by The Salvation Army.

With whatever false reasoning some may delude themselves, our experience with all classes of society proves that with the ousting of the saloon, nine-tenths of the drunkenness of the country disappeared. Of all welfare workers none were in closer touch with those who were afflicted with this burning thirst than my faithful officers and people, and their uniform and irrefutable testimony clearly show that the chief source of former debaucheries is gone.

One of my principal officers, an unimpeachable witness, said to me only a few days ago; "In former days I usually had eight to ten drunken men in my meetings. Since Prohibition came I have only seen two men so conditioned in all my meetings throughout the country. Commander, something has happened!"

Yes, something has happened. The drink-sodden wretch, who formerly was the despair of law and almost the despair of the Gospel, is found in only rare instances. Those who are working for the repeal or the nullification of the Prohibition Amendment should solemnly ask themselves whether they are prepared again to expose their fellowmen to this terrible temptation and peril.

One of my officers in Kentucky tells of an old mountaineer who said to him: "Captain, six years ago I had no home, no possessions at all. For years, I had been a drunkard. My wife and children lived in poverty. Now I have built and paid for my house. I live in the hot summer months on my lot by the river." The mother was sitting in the rocking chair. A first class record was playing, "Nearer, MY God, to Thee." The old man said, "I owe it all to God and the men and women of God who put down the accursed drink." SHALL AMERICA GO BACK?



Testimony of Rescue Officers

The superintendent of our Slum Settlement Work tells me that applications for relief are reduced fifty percent. She says: "The majority we now relieve are widows. The families in the districts we visit are better fed, better clothed, better housed. Another significant feature is the decrease of mortality among young children. It used to be a common thing for reports to reach us of babies that had fallen from fire escapes and infants that were smothered on account of drunken parents, but not one such report has reached us during the last year!"

Yes, something has happened. Our Women's Rescue Officers bear testimony to the effects of Prohibition upon the broken hearts of our city streets. These experienced workers cannot be deceived regarding the relation of strong drink or light wine to the social evil. They have a greatly simplified problem with the drink factor eliminated. Whereas in the past hundreds came to the refuge of our Homes as victims of wine-room or saloon-parlor seductions, caliber of cases coming under our care it would seem that the baser forms of the monster's subtle designs cannot be sustained without the stimulus of intoxicating drink. SHALL AMERICA GO BACK?

Let me ask you to step back to the days of the wide swung doors of the saloon. Let me tear the film from the eyes of men who are blinded by mercenary gains and selfish appetite. Let me persuade mothers and fathers of every status of life for one brief moment to blot out every other consideration while here today we look to the handwriting on the wall of the nation, and read what is written there.

Such trembling strokes, such weak, shaky characters; such long spaces between words; words ill-formed, words ill-spelled, words ill-placed. Such simple little sentences, but vastly comprehensive – such faint impress, but never to be obliterated. Whose are the fingers that have wielded the trembling pen, the thin fingers, the misshapen fingers, the twisted fingers? Whose is the writing? Why it is the children's – the handwriting of the children, across the wall of the nation – stretching from sea to sea!

Ah! You can hush every other voice of national and individual complaint; you may silence every other tongue, even those of mothers of destroyed sons and daughters, of wives of profligate



husbands, but let the children speak – the little children, the wronged children, the crippled children, the abused children, the blind children, the imbecile children, the nameless children, the starved children, the deserted children, the beaten children, the dead children!

O my God, this army of little children! Let their weak voices, faint with oppression, cold and hunger, be heard! Let their little faces, pinched by want of gladness, be heeded! Let their challenge – though made by small forms, too mighty for estimate – be reckoned with! Let their writing upon the wall of the nation – although traced by tiny fingers, as stupendous as eternity – be correctly interpreted and read, that the awful robbery of the lawful heritage of their little bodies, minds, and souls is laid at the brazen gate of Alcohol! SHALL AMERICA GO BACK?

The Challenge

I hear this challenge coming also as the voice of many waters from thousands of homes rehabilitated, from thousands of wastes reclaimed, from thousands of half-damned souls redeemed, from thousands of drunkards with manhood regained; from smoking flax and bruised reed, the chorus thrills on and on and on until it is caught up by ten thousand times ten thousand voices of faith and hope and love and liberty. Still on and on in vibrant tones it wings its way. Mothers on the cottage voice it, the sick in the hospital join in it, the children on the school bench lift it, the convict in the prison cell catches it, the striplings of new character in this new day shout it.

Still on and on the challenge rolls through garret and palace, over hill and through dale – onward and upward, higher and higher, until the dear ones in Glory catch the mighty sound and with all the redeemed, their faces aglow in the light of the Morning, join in as with a trumpet call that echoes along the everlasting hills.

SHALL AMERICA GO BACK?

Freedom and Restraint in the Use of Intoxicating Liquor

Editorial preface:



The following statements by the Commander-in-Chief of The Salvation Army in the United States were given a full page display in The New York Times. Let the liquor people and the opponents of the Eighteenth Amendment say what they will, here are the facts; and they are presented by one who has devoted a lifetime of study to the problem of inebriate manhood. Here are no gossamer theories; here are actual findings by those who sympathetically toil for the salvation of the drink slave.

Readers will admit that this is one of the most convincing and logical treatises of the Prohibition question that could be contained in the space required to print it. – Editor

Do Drys Ever Amount to Anything?

“What total abstainer ever amounted to anything?” asks the sneering wet.

Oh, just Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Edison, Admiral Perry, John D. Rockefeller, Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson, Henry Ford, Whittier, Bryant, Barnardo, William Booth, Nansen, Bernard Shaw, Wilfred Grenfel, Gandhi, Lindenberg.

Of course, this isn't the entire list, but then this is a small paper.

From The War Cry (New York), July 4, 1931.

Since my early girlhood I have lived in order to combat the grave evils arising out of the liquor traffic. Hundreds of times I have sung and prayed in the actual bars of the public houses in London while the sale of beer and spirits was proceeding. I have made my home in the underworld and engaged in the pitiable industries of the sweatshop, taken my place among the vendors of flowers and matchboxes and with the street singers collecting their pennies from the passersby.

My experience of this problem is thus at first hand and, beginning in Great Britain, it has continued on the Continent of Europe, in Canada and the Klondike, while, in the United States I



have completed twenty-five years of service during which period I have been able to observe the situation, both before and after the Eighteenth Amendment came into force.

Opposition to Liquor Traffic

The Salvation Army stands wholly outside politics and controversy and is well aware that its support of Prohibition is not approved by many friendly newspapers and generous contributors. With great respect to those who differ from us, we are bound, at whatever cost in popularity to say plainly that it would be impossible for us to carry on our work, except in direct opposition to the liquor traffic in all its forms.

In the use of beverages other than water, fermentation was never an essential, and today it is to an increasing extent eliminated. Tea, coffee, cocoa, served hot, with many cooling drinks, derived from fruits, have been developed as an alternative to wine, beer and spirits, and fulfill the legitimate purpose of what formerly was intoxicating liquor of varying strength.

There is an unanswerable case for abstinence. There are the vital statistics of insurance companies. There are the records of hospitals where patients, abstaining non-abstaining, submit to surgical treatment. In major operations, it is admitted that a patient without alcohol in his system enjoys an advantage. There are strict rules imposed on athletes in training. But, more significant than all these, is the policy pursued by organized industry, in which, as the United States Steel Corporation has put it, "the last man hired, the first man fired" is "the man who drinks."

The subdivided process essential to mass production, in which the strength of the human chain is no stronger than its least sober link, the increased speed and variety of locomotion at sea, in the air and along the highroad, the insistence on personal reliability in banks and offices, all this has necessitated in the United States an enrollment of abstinent workers. It means that the efficiency of the individual, when subjected to many varied tests, responds most readily and most reliably to a diet from which alcohol is excluded.

Difficulty of Restraint



Erring men and women have not found it possible to observe restraint in the use of alcohol, and, in all countries, at all times, the liquor interests, public and private, have seen to it that restraint is made as difficult as possible. The result is that wherever alcohol is used at all, it is widely abused.

As a result of an unexampled wave of prosperity, due in no small measure to Prohibition, many families, not long ago reckoned among the poor, have become comparatively and actually rich. It is thus a curious and ironical fact that in the very homes which owe much of their affluence directly to the economic results of the Eighteenth Amendment, there has been a tendency to discard the one restraint of which that affluence is a result.

The nouveau wets, as they go over the top into barbed wire entanglements of what, in the United States, should be the no man's and no woman's land of a deliberate disobedience to the law, are like the soldiers at the outset of a war. They think a good deal more of the bands playing and the flags flying than of the casualties that came to The Salvation Army – the boy whose name is no longer mentioned, the girl whose name is known only to herself.

"Bravado" of the Cocktail

Drinking in wealthy homes did not begin with Prohibition. On the contrary, it was so usual before Prohibition as to arouse no comment. Today, that drinking, even where it continues is restricted. Many a cocktail is served and on special occasions only less as booze than as bravado. Many a glass has become little more than a gesture. The orgies described in cheap fiction, the bacchanals staged for the movies, the cheap jests and insulting cartoons which are showered on the dries, are merely symptoms than an ancient and world wide evil dies hard.

If, however, it had been the fact which we deny that Prohibition is a social failure, we would reply that what is here meant by the word society, and especially society in certain fashionable areas, does not constitute the nation but only a small proportion of the nation, at most one-tenth. The real question is what has happened to the nine-tenths and here the evidence of The Salvation Army is, we submit, direct and unchallengeable.



In New York before Prohibition, The Salvation Army would collect 1,200 to 1,300 drunkards in a single night and seek to reclaim them. Prohibition immediately reduced this gathering to 400, and the proportion of actually intoxicated persons on the day selected from nineteen out of twenty to no more than seven in all. In fact, this method of evangelism yielded so few results that we gave it up.

In The Chicago Daily News of April 1 and 2, 1929, interviews were published with our officers serving in that city. For No. 1 Industrial home, with 120 men, Sunday was selected as a test day, because it immediately follows Saturday night. On one Sunday there were two drunks, and on the next one, none at all. This record compares with 50 percent of drunks ten years ago and 25 percent of drunks four years ago,

In Chicago it happened that our Palace Hotel was subjected to an unforeseen and entirely impartial test. There had been a report of small pox in the city and all the men in the hotel, about 500, were vaccinated, on the nights of January 10 and 11, by an independent physician. Not one of the men was found to be under the influence of liquor.

The women of American do not tolerate an inebriated manhood. It is no mere coincidence that the Eighteenth Amendment, prohibiting liquor, should have been historically simultaneous with the Nineteenth Amendment, giving the vote to women, and should have preceded by a few years only the proposed Twentieth Amendment, drafted to abolish child labor. These legislative enactments and proposals are, all of them, parts of a general movement toward the defense of domestic life against the destroying menace of selfishness in the environment.

The Great War was an explosion which shook not thrones alone but traditions and social restraints. By these disturbances women in the United States as well as men were affected and it is always in colleges that youth in its eagerness tries its experiments. Hence we have the statement that there has been more drinking among young people since Prohibition than formerly and this increase particularly affects girls.

So far as I am aware, there has never been any attempt to prove this by statistics or other definite evidence. It appears to be a case not of increased drinking but of greatly increased sensitiveness



to the drinking that is taking place. At Oxford and Cambridge drink is served in the colleges as a matter of course, and no one thinks anything about it. The Salvationist notices that in the United States there has been not only reckless drinking but reckless thinking, reckless teaching and reckless preaching.

The public frequently is confronted by what seems to be appalling statistics. Nor is it realized that a big figure may represent what comparatively speaking is a small fact. Let us suppose that 10,000,000 persons in the United States spend no more than \$1 a week on liquor. Even so, that aggregate expenditure would work out at \$500,000,000, a very large number which taken by itself might be so presented as to suggest that the law had broken down. But what would be the truth of the matter? It would be that 100,000,000 people in the United States did not touch liquor from one year end to another, and that even the 10,000,000 people were bone dry on six days a week.

It is under these circumstances that liquor takes a toll of \$34 per annum for the individual and \$3.25 per week for a household. It is true that rather more than a third of the expenditure is paid into the exchequer as a taxation. It is a taxation that falls in the main on those who are least able to sustain it and, incidentally, it proves that high taxation even where it is strictly collected, does not solve the liquor question.

The liquor traffic can be handled in three ways; First, State ownership and control of the traffic; secondly, State restriction of the traffic; and thirdly, prohibition.

Over State ownership and control I need not waste many words. Under our Federal form of government in which forty-nine sovereign areas would have to be dealt with, the legal, constitutional and financial difficulties would be enormous, while politically such a scheme lies wholly outside the legislative possibilities. The idea that the consumption of liquor would be diminished by such a distributive network of selling places appears to be contrary to all the probabilities, and a legal glass of beer does just as much harm as an illegal glass.

The people who advocate such regulation have short memories. They do not seem to be aware that it was the failure of regulation throughout the United States that drove us into Prohibition.



Nor is there any country in the world where regulation has solved the liquor problem. In the United States it was regulation which corrupted our politics, bribed our law courts and police and maintained our red-light areas.

The truth is that whatever restriction is placed by the law on liquor traffic it will be the aim of the liquor traffic to rebel against it. No liquor traffic anywhere has kept faith with the law except in so far as the law is on the side of the liquor traffic.

The Salvation Army is wholly opposed to the policy of introducing light wines and beers sold under the law for consumption off the premises. That policy means the return of the saloon triumphant into our national life. Wherever beer is sold, there is the saloon, even if it be the backdoor of a rabbit hutch.

Let us suppose that 10,000 of such places were started in New York City. Does anybody suppose that such places, the very symbols of a criminal triumph over the forces of law and order, the rendezvous of bandits, bootleggers, racketeers and dishonest politicians, would be content with their profits on light wines and beers, or insistent on consumption off the premises?

The Law and the Rebel

There would be exactly the same forces organized to break down regulation that are today organized against Prohibition, and the idea that the rich man who likes his cocktail and his glass of whisky and his champagne is going to be content with lager beer and some scarcely alcoholic light wine as an alternative may be dismissed. He will say what he is saying today, that he has a right to drink what he likes and to get it where he can.

The idea that the provision of a beer can ever be a cure for drunkenness is fantastic. More than half the alcohol consumed in the United States before Prohibition was in the form of beer. Most of the drunkenness was due to beer. On home brewing and distilling the view of The Salvation Army is equally emphatic. These are a defiance pointblank of the Eighteenth Amendment, which in plain terms forbids the citizen of the United States to manufacture alcoholic liquor. The idea that liquor has been or ever will be widely brewed by the individual family for its own exclusive



use may be dismissed. It is merely the revival of moonshine or the illicit still with which the United States has been long familiar.

The conclusion of The Salvation Army therefore has been in one sentence, that prohibition in the full sense of the word has been a major reason for the rapid advance of the United States to a foremost place among nations; that liquor not prohibited is a major reason for the retardation of a similar progress among other peoples of the world, and that if prohibition be attacked, whether by foreign nations or by certain of our own citizens, the reason is, in the main, a selfishness on the part of the individual or of the financial interest involved. In a sentence, the world is moving toward the view that liquor is a survival of the past; and, manifestly, Prohibition in the United States has come to stay and must be accepted as the law of the land.