

which, when I was there, had reached a membership of 120,000 and had changed the lives and habits of whole communities. And a Belfast lady told me a story that was the outgrowth of the work done by this society. She said that many drunkards had been reformed, and that a minister, speaking to the wife of one of these reformed men, said: 'Your home life must be more pleasant now, since your husband has quit drinking,' and she said: 'Oh, yes, yes, he is more like a friend now than a husband.' (Laughter.) And such a change can be accomplished and can take place under favorable circumstances.

"France, one of the greatest wine producing countries in the world, has decided to teach in the schools the effect of alcoholism on the system. But the most startling piece of news comes from Germany. Some two years ago the emperor, speaking to the naval cadets at Vevey, dared to attack what he described as the traditional beer drinking habits of his people, and told these young men that in any contests that might arise the country must depend upon them, and that it could not do so unless their brains were clear and their nerves steady, and then he warned them that alcohol would rob their brains of clearness and their nerves of steadiness and in the name of the Fatherland he appealed to them to join total abstinence societies, and held up for their own example the total abstinence societies of the British navy. And when I read this appeal of Germany's emperor to the young men of that country to be strong for war I asked myself: 'May we not appeal to the young men of this country to abstain from the use of alcohol, that their brains may be clear and their nerves steady for the battles of peace and progress that lie before us!' (Applause.)

"But there is a phase of this moral development that I can not pass unnoticed. It is a phase that has interested me and I doubt not it has interested you. It is the change in the point of view from which men are considering public questions. Sixteen years ago I found that most of those who were actively engaged in reforms felt an immediate pecuniary personal need for remedial legislation. One could notice that everywhere. And it is not strange, for we were then at the end of an era of falling prices. For nearly a quarter of a century the purchasing power of the dollar had been rising and the price level had been falling. For nearly twenty-five years the money owner and the money changer had been gathering in an unearned increment and the world was being forced into bankruptcy. It was not a national peril only, it was international. There had been three great congresses in which every important nation was represented, and everybody everywhere admitted the seriousness of the situation. The only question was 'How shall we escape?' That was the situation then. It is entirely changed now. Within the last sixteen years we have had unexpected increase in the production of a precious metal, not only unexpected, but unparalleled, nothing like it in all the history of man, and this increase in the world's volume of standard money has reversed the process. Now, instead of the dollar rising, it is falling. Now, instead of the price level falling, it is rising. Now, instead of the world going into bankruptcy it is getting out, and if you are paying a debt contracted sixteen years ago you are paying it in dollars that will not purchase more than two-thirds as much on the average as the dollars that you borrowed, and nobody calls you a repudiator either.

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