

BEFORE THE CATHOLIC TOTAL ABSTINENCE UNION

The following appeared in the Chicago Record-Herald of May 19:

William Jennings Bryan took the platform as a temperance orator at the Auditorium theater last night under the auspices of the Catholic Total Abstinence Union. His address attracted an audience of two thousand persons, who enthused as much as ever over his political utterances in times past.

Mr. Bryan discussed the term "personal liberty" in a manner that seemed to please his auditors.

"Personal liberty" is a phrase which is used a great deal by those who oppose legislation on the liquor question," said Mr. Bryan. "It is time that we had a definition of 'personal liberty.' We are all opposed to any unnecessary restrictions upon personal liberty, and yet we are all in favor of such restrictions as may be necessary. The question is, what is necessary?"

"The individual surrenders a certain amount of his personal liberty when he enters society. He makes this surrender in return for the advantages derived from society. For instance:

"If a man is living on a desert he can ride his horse as fast as he pleases. But he can not run his horse on a public highway. He can not gratify his love for horse racing at the risk of the lives of others.

"Every city fixes a speed limit. Even the liberty of the automobilist is restricted at times, and he is compelled to reduce the speed of his machine to a point that is considered safe. And so with the restriction upon the sale and use of liquor. No individual can claim a right to use liquor in such a way as to infringe upon the equal rights of other people.

"I would not favor legislation forbidding use of liquor at any time or under any circumstances. I would consider this an unnecessary limitation upon the liberty of the individual, but I am in favor of such restriction as may seem necessary for the protection of society.

"There is a good deal of discussion at this time over the unit. That is, as to whether the power to regulate the liquor traffic shall be vested in the town, in the precinct, in the county, in the state, or in the nation.

"I hold that every unit ought to have authority to act on this subject, except as it is restrained by a larger unit. That is, that the block, the ward, the city, the precinct, the county, the state and the nation should have the undisputed right to exclude the sale of liquor within its limits, or to fix such restrictions upon the sale of liquor as the people of the unit may deem necessary for their protection and welfare. I believe, also, that the larger unit has a right to control the smaller one on this, as on other subjects.

"It is sometimes objected that this rule does not work both ways. That is, that while a county has the right to close all the saloons within its borders in case the county goes dry, that a victory for the wets does not give authority to open saloons anywhere and everywhere within the county. But this is not a valid one.

"The saloon differs from all other businesses in that no one regards it as a blessing. It is not defended as a good thing. It is not an educational center. It is not an economic or moral asset to a community. It is a nuisance, and only tolerated when it is believed to be necessary. It can not be defended at all if the community does not want it.

"No one would be willing to stand sponsor for the doctrine that a saloon ought to be forced into a town against the wishes of the people of the town. But the right of the people of the community to protest is so well recognized and so firmly established that I need not discuss the matter.

"What I want to emphasize is that there ought to be no objection to the exercise of authority by any unit. The liquor dealer ought to be content to sell where his services are desired, and the manufacturer of liquor ought to be content to dispose of his products among those who desire them. He is entirely outside of his sphere when he attempts to force his business upon a community or to interfere in decisions upon the liquor question.

"Whether liquor should be sold or not in any community is a question which the community can determine better than outsiders, and I have no disposition to lay down rules upon this subject. I content myself with asserting the right of the community to control, and am willing that the community shall decide this question upon its own judgment. If the people of a block object to having a saloon in the block

I think they ought to have a right to exclude it.

"If the people of a ward object to having a saloon in the ward, I think they ought to have a right to exclude it. If the people of a town object to having a saloon in the town, I think they ought to have the right to exclude it. If the people of a county object to having a saloon in the county, I think they ought to have the right to exclude it, and so with the state and with the nation.

"If, on the other hand, the people of any unit desire a saloon, they ought to have it, provided the people of the larger unit consent. It can not be argued with justice that people of any ward or town or county shall have the right to open saloons without consulting a larger unit, because the saloon at its best is a menace and a demoralizing influence. Moreover, it increases taxes and jeopardizes both property and life. All who are in a position to suffer from the existence of a saloon have a right to a voice in deciding whether it should be permitted to exist."

Discussing proposed federal legislation on the liquor question, Mr. Bryan said he favored an act recognizing the right of a state to control shipments of liquor immediately upon its entrance into the state. He criticized the government for issuing federal licenses where no local license has been issued.

"The interstate commerce clause of the constitution has been used in the nullifying of state laws on the liquor question," he said. "I believe that we ought to have an act of congress recognizing the right of a state to control shipments of liquor the moment the liquor enters the state."

"If the state can be intrusted with the enactment of laws for the protection of the home, for the protection of property and for the protection of life, it ought to be intrusted with the enactment of liquor laws. If the state can be trusted with the imprisonment of the individual and even with the taking of human life, surely it can be intrusted with the control of the use, sale and transportation of liquor within its borders.

"There is another congressional act needed. You will find that there are a great many more federal licenses issued in every state than there are licensed saloons. This seems that in every state liquor is sold contrary to local laws.

"The federal government ought not to be in partnership with lawbreakers. I believe that we should have a congressional statute prohibiting the issuance of a federal license except where a local license has been issued. Objection has been made to this on the ground that the constitution would prohibit such partiality in the issuance of federal licenses.

"Without attempting to decide this constitutional question I venture to suggest that the same end might be reached in another way. The law might require every applicant for a federal license to furnish proof that he has published notice of his application for a federal license and has served written notice upon the local authorities; in this way the local authorities would be put upon their guard. Certainly no objection can be made to such a measure.

"If the federal government can not withhold a license in dry territory, it certainly can not do less than require that the local authorities shall be notified of the intention of the local dealers to sell liquor in violation of liquor laws."

Turning to the individual aspect of the problem, Mr. Bryan said he would not call it sinful to take an occasional drink, but believed it to be folly to drink even in moderation.

"I am a teetotaler, and have been all my life," he said. "I do not use intoxicating liquor as a beverage, and wherever opportunity offers for the giving of advice, I advise others to abstain. I would not say that it is a sin to take an occasional drink, but I am willing to indorse the opinion expressed by Solomon, more than twenty centuries ago, and say, with him, that 'wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby, is not wise!'"

"I hold that it is not wise to drink even in moderation. First, because drinking is an expensive habit. It is not wise to spend on a thing that is useless money which would yield a return in benefits if expended in some other way. The least that can be said of money spent for liquor is that it is wasted, and no one can afford to waste money, no matter how much of it he may have. I might go farther, and add that a vast sum is spent on liquor which, in equity, belongs to parent, to wife, to children or to society."

Previous to the Auditorium meeting Mr. Bryan was banqueted at the Hotel LaSalle. From the hotel to the Auditorium theater went a procession headed by the Paulist and Hibernian divi-

sions of the Illinois temperance cadets and the Paulist fife and drum corps. Along the line of march on LaSalle street, Jackson boulevard and Michigan avenue great crowds gathered and gave the famous commoner a big ovation.

ON THE VERDI

It is a long ride from Rio to Barbados—3187 miles and the trip is made in eleven days, but a great deal depends on the boat and the passengers. I am making the journey on the Verdi, a two-year-old ship belonging to the Lamport and Holt Line, which makes the round trip from New York to Buenos Aires every three months. Captain J. Byrne is in charge of the vessel and he is one of the most genial and accommodating captains I have met. When he is not on duty he spends his time trying to add to the comfort and pleasure of the passengers. There are about one hundred passengers on the upper deck, representing several nationalities and all have taken part in the games and social gatherings that have relieved the monotony of the voyage.

We have had the ordinary religious services, a meeting at which addresses were made and several national hymns were sung by the passengers representing those nations. One evening was given up to a program furnished by a wild west show which is returning from Argentina, and another to a minstrel show in which the different parts were taken by members of the crew. Two afternoons have been occupied with games on the deck. The following is a partial program:

Sports—To be held on board Thursday, March 24 and Saturday, March 26, 1910, commencing at 2:15 p. m. each day.

President—Captain J. Byrne.
Chairman—Mr. T. Blumenthal.
Treasurer—Mr. H. Baynes.
Secretary—Mr. R. A. Hulse.
Committee—Mrs. Porter, Miss J. Buhler, Mr. Juan de Bertodano.

First Day:

Potato Race—Gents.
Potato Race—Ladies.
Potato Race—Children.
Sack Race.
Egg and Spoon Race.
Whistling Race.
Tug of War—Gents.
Shaving Race.

Second day:

Nail Driving Competition—Ladies.
Pillow Fight on Spar.
Neck-tie Race.
Chalking Pigs Eye—Ladies.
Obstacle Race.
Tug of War—Ladies.

"Are You There?" Pillow Contest.

As will be seen, men, women and children take part. The most spirited contest was what is generally known as the "spar fight." Two men sit astride a spar pole and fight with pillows. As they are not allowed to put their hands on the pole they soon lose their balance and fall on the mats below—the one who keeps his balance longest wins. There were many entries and the winners in the different contests were matched against each other until all had been eliminated but two—Mr. Peterson, a big Swedish-American from Minneapolis, and Trent Stormi, a tall Argentine with some Swiss blood in his veins. They were well matched and each one won a fall from the other. Then Peterson went down a second time, and it looked like Stormi had won, but he, having a high sense of honor told the judges that he was not entitled to the decision because he had involuntarily put his hand on the pole and thus kept his balance. Then they went at it again and after a few pillow blows were exchanged Stormi went down and left Peterson the victor.

Another pillow contest which afforded a great deal of amusement was the game called "Are you there?" Two men are blind-folded and then armed with pillows and placed a few feet apart. They alternately ask "Are you there?" When one asks the question the other answers yes and tries to dodge. As may be imagined, the efforts to strike where the sound comes from and the efforts to escape keep the onlookers in a state of hilarity.

There are fourteen Argentine officers on board on their way to the United States to superintend the construction of the two battleships for the building of which contracts were recently awarded to American firms. They are a fine lot of men, most of them young, and they have taken an active part in the games. The Americans outnumber any other nationality on the passenger list. Most of them are young business men or represent American houses. The next group in number is composed of missionaries and