

more strictly against the use of alcohol by employes. Why? Because a clear brain and a steady nerve are required in every important avenue of industry, and alcohol befuddles the brain and paralyzes the nerves.

No employer cares to put business in the hands of a tippler; the man who drinks can not safely be trusted with the care of life or property. Read the advertisements in the want columns. Did you ever see an item like this: "Wanted—A good moderate drinker for a responsible position." No saloon-keeper would stand sponsor for such an advertisement, for total abstinence is a virtue even behind the bar.

LOYALTY TO RUM VS. LOYALTY TO GOVERNMENT

There has been a growing disposition in this country and throughout the world, to emphasize the evils of strong drink, but even the most enthusiastic advocates of temperance have been surprised at the ghastly light which the war in Europe has thrown upon the subject. It has been found that patriotism — patriotism, that compelling force which throughout the ages has led men to offer their lives for their country—is no match for the appetite which alcohol cultivates in its victims. Loyalty to Bacchus, Gambrinus and Barleycorn, is greater than loyalty to king, or kaiser, or czar. The use of drink has been found to be so destructive of efficiency, that the belligerent governments, not on moral grounds, but purely on economic grounds, have been compelled to resort to restrictive measures. The aeroplane that drops its bomb from above and the submarine which shoots its torpedo from below are less to be feared than the schooner that crosses the bar.

NO LINE BETWEEN MODERATION AND EXCESS

But why talk of the moderate use of alcoholic drinks? There is no fixed line at which drinking ceases to be moderate and becomes excessive. Every victim of the habit has sought for this line, but he has sought in vain; like the horizon, it recedes from him as he advances until it finally disappears in the starless night of drunkenness. No one begins to drink with the expectation of yielding to the appetite; most of the men who have been wrecked by alcohol have had their period of boasting when they proclaimed their ability to drink or leave it alone at will. It is not safe to trifle with disease, and drinking becomes a disease as soon as the use of it has caused a craving for it. No age is immune from the appetite for alcohol. It fastens itself as readily upon those of advanced years as upon those in youth or in middle life. A physician recently told me of a case in which a man took his first taste of whiskey when he was above seventy, and was never sober again during the remaining four years of his life. Who can defend the taking of such risks as those involved in the use of intoxicating liquor? All history, sacred and profane, warns us against the worship of the bleer-eyed god.

"Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth its color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright.

"At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder."

This is the admonition of Solomon. Alcohol still bites; it still stings. Surely it is the part of wisdom to "touch not, taste not, and handle not" a thing which, even when used sparingly causes an appreciable loss in health, in strength, and in service; which, when used in so-called moderation, causes wretchedness, cruelty and crime, and which finds its culmination in delirium tremens, the most terrorizing experience through which a human being can pass.

DRINK WRONGS HOME AND SOCIETY.

But I am not willing to rest the case in favor of total abstinence entirely upon the ground that one who uses alcohol brings danger upon himself. That argument, while it should be sufficient to deter the prudent man, has in it an element of selfishness. While one is justified in abstaining from that which would reduce his physical and mental capacity below the maximum, he can not ignore the effect which his conduct has upon others, and no one in this land and age can be ignorant of the suffering and injustice which alcohol has brought into the home. In cases innumerable the husband has been converted into a beast, and the burden of supporting the family has been thrown upon the wife. In cases without number drink has robbed the children of the guardianship of a father, sometimes even of the affectionate care of a mother, made the coming of the parent a cause of alarm,

Boys, Will You Sign the Pledge With Me?

A pledge of total abstinence is being signed by a host of boys in Michigan—why not the boys of other states as well? A book will be opened at The Commoner office, wherein will be entered the names and addresses of those who sign this pledge with me. Cut out the pledge, paste it on a piece of paper and sign it. Lay the pledge away that you may have it as a reminder of the decision you have made, but send a postal card to The Commoner, stating that you have signed it, and giving your age and address. If you do

not care to state your age, use the word "adult," instead of giving the number of years. Receipt of these pledges will be acknowledged by publication in The Commoner in which only the name and address will be given. Ask others to sign with you—secure as many signatures as possible—and thus be the means of spreading the influence of the pledge. Those who abstain from drink do good not only to themselves, but to those also who are encouraged by their example. W. J. BRYAN.

Total Abstinence Pledge

I, the undersigned, promise, God helping us, never to use intoxicating liquor as a beverage.

Date	Name	Age	Residence
Nov. 28, 1914.	William Jennings Bryan.	54.	Tencola, Mich.

(This is the temperance pledge in Mr. Bryan's own handwriting that he presented to 5,500 boys at Ann Arbor. It will be circulated all over the state by boys of the Y. M. C. A. Mr. Bryan believes that 50,000 Michigan boys will sign with him.—Detroit (Michigan) Times.)

While Mr. Bryan asks the readers of The Commoner to sign with him, he desires it understood that his object is to secure signers, not merely to enjoy the honor of signing with others. If any one prefers to sign by himself, let him do so. Or, if he prefers, let him ask any one he pleases to sign with him. But whether alone or with another, let him SIGN.

and changed the smile of welcome into an expression of fear. Neither can we forget the burden that drink throws upon society, first, in decreasing the productive power of wage earners and, second, in imposing a pecuniary burden upon all for the care of those who, through the use of liquor, have been brought to the poor-house or to the penitentiary.

INFLUENCE OF EXAMPLE

But, there is another argument the force of which I feel sure this audience will appreciate, namely, man's responsibility for the example which he sets to others. If one uses intoxicating liquor himself he can not well advise others against it; at least, he is not apt to do so, for the consciousness of inconsistency puts a restraint upon his tongue.

WHY SIGN THE PLEDGE?

The signing of the pledge is the outward evidence of an inward resolve which everyone must take who has reached the decision not to drink. If you do not intend to use liquor, why not let your determination help others as well as yourself? Each individual has an influence and that influence is on one side of the line or the other. If one drinks, his influence is necessarily on the side of drinking; if he does not drink, his influence is on the side of total abstinence. Surely the appetite for intoxicants must be strong in deed if it can overcome the natural desire of every good citizen to contribute his mite to so righteous a cause. In several of the belligerent nations the sovereign has announced his abstinence from the use of liquor in order that his example may encourage his subjects to abstain; in this land, where every citizen is a sovereign, why should the individual be less concerned about the influence of his example.

A CALL TO THE COLORS

The world is aroused to the menace of alcohol — war has been declared against it in every civilized land and there is no neutral ground. I call you to the colors—to the standard raised by the National Abstainers Union for "Health and Home and Humanity." Rise! Let us pledge our support to the cause in water—in water, the daily need of every living thing. It ascends from the seas, obedient to the summons of the sun, and descending, showers blessings—upon the

earth; it gives of its sparkling beauty to the fragrant flowers; its alchemy transmutes base clay into golden grain; it is the canvas upon which the finger of the Infinite traces the radiant bow of promise. It is the drink that refreshes and adds no sorrow with it—Jehovah looked upon it at Creation's dawn and said — "It is good."

MISSISSIPPI ENDORSES NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

E. A. Fitzgerald offered the following resolution endorsing the national administration, which was unanimously adopted, and the secretary of the executive committee instructed to send copies of same to the President Wilson and Secretary of State Bryan.

"Resolved, by the democratic state executive committee assembled in the city of Jackson on April 14, 1915:

"That we most unqualifiedly endorse the very able and patriotic administration of President Wilson. Not since the civil war has a president and an administration been confronted with so many difficult and knotty problems. The ship of state has been steered in such a way as to prevent foreign entanglements. Neutrality has been observed and our foreign trade interfered with as little as possible during the greatest war of history.

"We also wish to endorse and commend the very able administration of the department of state by Secretary Bryan for the distinguished services rendered the president in handling the affairs of state during this trying period in the history of our government."

Reactionaries and conservatives complain bitterly, when they are not in the control of government, that too little attention is being paid to the fundamental principles of the republican form of government. The moment, however, that the progressives complete any legislative program or take a little rest before moving onward, the reactionaries at once begin to work on a new alliance of business and politics and seek to make themselves believe that the good old times in politics are about to return. They have queer ideas of what are fundamental principles in government.