

## Worldwide Temperance Wave

[From Current Opinion.]

But along with this crab-like movement in the general cause of social and economic change, there has been a most spectacular advance movement in the suppression of the liquor traffic. What the Deseret Evening News calls "the world-wide temperance wave" has made itself manifest in one nation after another. Not in Russia alone but in France and Great Britain and Germany the war has vitalized the growing opposition to alcoholic drinks and brought it to a head. The tax on the sale of absinthe in France has heretofore produced a revenue of from \$15,000,000 to \$20,000,000 a year. "A wave from the depths," to quote M. Cailaux's phrase, was feared if any attempt was made to suppress it. When the war began the academy of political and moral sciences made haste to memorialize the government in behalf of the drastic treatment not only of absinthe but of other liquors as well. The chamber of deputies and the senate made almost equal haste to prohibit the sale of absinthe, and this has been heralded as but preparatory to the sale of all alcoholic liquors. Some of the speakers in the chamber almost vied with our own Congressman Hobson in their sweeping condemnation of the entire liquor traffic of France. In Berlin orders have been issued forbidding the sale of strong intoxicants, including "virtually everything but beer," to the soldiers, and many cafes are said to be on the verge of ruin because of the limitations put on the hours of sale to anybody. In Great Britain, Lloyd George, the chancellor of the exchequer, several weeks ago announced that the government had under consideration much the same sort of sweeping measure that Russia has put into force. Commenting on these developments and the further fact that Iceland, half a century ago one of the most drunken nations in the world, has lately prohibited the liquor traffic entirely and even ordered all supplies held over to be exported at once, the New York Times remarks that "at the rate he is going, the Rum Devil will soon have nowhere in this broad world a rest for the sole of his foot."

### Russia's Millions Get on the Water Wagon

It has been in Russia that the most spectacular event in the history of prohibition or of any social reform has been enacted. The origin of the event according to Isabel F. Hapgood,

long a student of Russian affairs, can be readily traced back to the prohibition movement in this country. In 1886, two years after the St. John campaign, one Dr. Peter Semyonovitch Alexyeeff, of Moscow, visited this land, to study our hospital system. In a book published two years later, "About America," he stated that neither the Rocky mountains nor Niagara Falls could produce such an impression on a Russian as that produced by the "success of the fight with drunkenness." He started a crusade in Russia and enlisted Count Tolstoy almost at once. Temperance societies were started, and in time the agitation reached the Czar and enlisted his warm sympathies. For months prior to this war, the agitation against the liquor traffic had been carried on vigorously. Count Witte, who died last month, made the manufacture and sale of vodka a government monopoly years ago with a view to checking the evil. In 1913, the revenue from this source was 900,000,000 rubles (\$463,500,000), or nearly one-fourth of the entire revenue. Almost as soon as the Duma was formed it began attempts to restrict the drink evil. A little over a year ago drastic provisions were passed along the line of local option. It was at that time that the Czar issued his famous rescript running as follows:

"I have come to the firm conviction that the duty lies upon me, before God and Russia, to introduce into the management of the state finances and of the economic problems of the country fundamental reforms for the welfare of my beloved people. It is not meet that the welfare of the exchequer should be dependent upon the ruin of the spiritual and productive energies of numbers of my loyal subjects."

### Russia Empties Her Saloons and Fills Her Savings Banks

When this war began, the shameful exhibition made during the mobilization for the war with Japan was still fresh in memory, and almost at once the order positively forbidding the sale of vodka during the present war was issued. The time has since been extended and the prohibition is to last "forever." The sale of beer and porter may be allowed, but even this is stopped on the petition of village and volost societies, provincial assemblies, municipal councils and other interested bodies, and there are few towns and villages that have not taken advantage of this privilege. As

a result, the productivity of labor, according to a statement made by Lloyd George before the British parliament a few weeks ago, has increased in Russia from 30 to 50 per cent. According to a report made by the controller of the Russian treasury before the budget committee of the Duma six months after the liquor decree had been issued, the national savings had increased from 700,000 rubles in December, 1913, to 29,000,000 rubles in December, 1914, and from 300,000 rubles in the first half of January, 1914, to 15,300,000 rubles in January, 1915. The city council of Moscow, by a vote of three to one, adopted complete prohibition. Petrograd has cut down the licenses to about forty. In the country districts, according to George Kennan, writing in the Outlook, drinking of intoxicants has "almost wholly ceased" and "a profound change in the psychology, the life and the economic status of the people" has ensued.

### The Spirit of Neal Dow Goes Marching On

In the United States, where this action in Russia had its inception, if Miss Hapgood is not mistaken, the cause of prohibition has had in 1914 an unusually successful year. Five states were added to the roll—Virginia, Arizona, Colorado, Oregon and Washington. The advocates of the movement are expecting to add six more states this year. In the house of representatives the recent vote on the submission of a prohibition amendment to the federal constitution was 197 in favor and 189 against—not the requisite two-thirds but a clear plurality. Only 49 congressmen were absent when the vote was taken. Since that, signs of the growing political importance of the movement have multiplied. Senator Cummins, of Iowa, has entered the arena as a candidate for the presidential nomination and the fourth plank in his proposed platform is: "The saloon must go." Senator Clapp, of Minnesota, says: "You may smile now, but a new cloud has loomed up. In 1916 I would not be at all surprised to see the prohibition issue become a very dominant factor in the campaign." The Chicago Tribune, the strongest paper in the middle west, says:

"We believe that if a nation-wide vote upon the manufacture and sale of liquor were permitted, the nation would prohibit it. Men who drink would vote for prohibition—not all who drink, but many who drink. What would happen thereafter we do not pretend to know.

"It is observable and conceded that the drift of the nation is towards restriction, if not extinction, of the liquor business. Nation-wide prohibition within ten years? It may be." The Toledo Blade prints a dispatch from Washington to the effect that the foes of the liquor traffic seem likely to have a bigger campaign fund in 1916 than either of the leading political parties. The Chicago Evening Post thinks that recent events mean "the eventual and inevitable end of the liquor traffic in these United States." It is especially impressed by the prohibition strength manifested in the democratic ranks, about thirty more democratic congressmen voting for the prohibition amendment than voted against it. It is an issue, the Grand Rapids Press notes, which now cuts across all established political boundaries, and "when it does come it will provide the hottest campaign since that of 1860." While the European war is not, of course, responsible for the movement in this country, there seems to be no doubt that the actions of the warring governments, especially Russia, has given new impetus to the movement here.

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