

gineers, has this to say concerning the position of his organization on the liquor question:

"We fight the liquor evil perhaps as hard as any of the churches. Liquor has no place in our modern railroading. I never expect to be manager of a railroad, but if I were a man could not work for me who did take a drink of liquor either on or off duty. I would not make a difference between the two, because a man who will drink off duty is not fit to go on duty when the time comes. I fail to understand why our men do not come out in the open in certain localities and fight this enemy. It tends to destroy the home life, to lower the tone of the citizenship of the community and the morals of the individual as well, to say nothing of his mental and physical health."

On December 21, 1916, I wrote the following letter to—

W. C. Thornton, president of the Denver Trades and Labor Assembly, Denver, Colo.

Chester J. Common, president of the Denver Building Trades Council, Denver Colo.

Clint C. Houston, editor Denver Labor Bulletin, Denver, Colo. The Bulletin is the official organ of the Colorado State Federation of Labor.

Otto F. Thum, former city clerk, Denver Colo.

"Dear Sir: I am taking the liberty of writing to you for some information which I would like to secure. At the present time I am a member of the United States congress, having been re-elected last November to my second term. For 20 years before I began my services in congress I was employed as a locomotive fireman and engineer. I am a member in good standing in the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers. I am also a member of the committee on labor of the house of representatives.

"For these reasons I am intensely interested in anything that affects the welfare of the working classes.

"The information I desire to obtain is this: Will you please state to me in a letter your opinion as to prohibition of the traffic in intoxicating liquors in Colorado and what effect it has had on the working people of your city and state?

"Very truly, yours,

"JOHN G. COOPER."

Mr. Speaker, I desire to place in the Record the answers which I received from these various leaders of organized labor in reply to the inquiries which I made of them:

Clint C. Houston, Editor the Denver Labor Bulletin

"Denver, Colo., December 26, 1916.—Hon. John G. Cooper, House of Representatives Office Building, Washington, D. C. My Dear Mr. Cooper: Replying to your letter of the 21st instant, inviting my opinion as to the effect of prohibition in Colorado upon the working people of this city and state, I am pleased to give you the substance of a letter written by me some three months ago, which was used in the anti-saloon crusades successfully conducted in Nebraska and Michigan. This letter was written to a Mr. John Jesselyn, of Gothenburg, Nebr., from which I quote as follows:

"You ask about the effect of prohibition in Colorado so far as it affects the working people. The law in nine months has worked a wonderful revolution for good, and at least 75 per cent of the union voters who were against the amendment would support it now. The wage earners have ceased to spend their money for booze and are buying

bread and clothing for their families. I would say, on the whole, the condition of Colorado working people is at least 50 per cent better as a result of state-wide prohibition and the city of Denver is a great deal more prosperous. All the store-rooms vacated by saloons are now occupied by legitimate enterprises, and the citizens only wonder why they tolerated the booze joints as long as they did. The increase in savings deposits has been remarkable, and the merchants report collections from 40 to 60 per cent better.

"It was claimed by the liquor interests that prohibition in Colorado would ruin the summer-tourist business in Colorado. As a matter of fact, statistics of the Denver tourist bureau show that during the past summer the number of tourists visiting and remaining one week and longer in this state was almost double that of any previous year. It was further shown that at least 75 per cent more money was spent in the state by tourists than during any season on record. This notwithstanding the absence of saloons and the "dryness" of hotels. Plans are now under way for the erection of several additional large tourist hotels in this state.

"Take the Bulletin as a concrete illustration. It was prophesied by our "wet" friends that a labor paper couldn't exist in a dry town. We lost about \$50 a month in liquor advertising and some 350 bartender and brewery worker subscribers. Today we are doing four times the advertising business and have five times the number of subscribers as when Denver had 350 saloons and 5 breweries in operation. Besides, the subscribers and advertisers pay their bills much more promptly and we don't have to degrade ourselves by "settin' 'em up" to a lot of barroom flies when we collect a bill.

"One of the notable improvements is the decrease in crime of every grade. There hasn't been a murder in Denver since the saloons were driven out, whereas hitherto the record was from one to five a month. The city has been ridden of bums, pickpockets, and badger gangsters; in fact, it is much more of a privilege than ever to live in Colorado, and other states will find the same cause for congratulation when they drive the saloons and breweries from their border. And I used to be a pretty good patron of the liquor business myself."

"During the past year, the first of state-wide prohibition in Colorado, the wage earners have been especially prosperous. Merchants in Denver report new high records for sales. The week preceding Christmas the banks of Denver paid out over half a million dollars to members of Christmas clubs, practically all of which had been deposited by wage earners. It is needless to say that this large sum was in a great measure accumulated by reason of saloons being abolished on January 1, 1916.

"It is my opinion that abolishment of saloons in America would do as much to advance the wage earner as has organized labor. At the recent November election there was on the ballot in this state a proposition known as the 'beer amendment,' which would permit the manufacture and sale of beer in this state. It was defeated by a majority of 85,789. I would say that fully 80 per cent of the organized-labor vote in Colorado went against this 'beer amendment,' and among the 50,000 members of trade and railway labor

For a Dry Nation

The Commoner, Lincoln, Neb.: I am in favor of driving the saloon out of the democratic party and out of the nation and I will endeavor to secure the number of subscribers to The Commoner marked (X) in this coupon. I will remit for these subscriptions as I send them at your clubbing rate of 60c per year. Yours truly,

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organizations in this state it would now be a rare exception to find one who would declare himself or herself in favor of rehabilitation of the saloon.

"Trusting this information will serve the purpose requested in your letter, I am,

"Fraternally, yours,
"CLINT C. HOUSTON, Editor."

Reply of Otto F. Thum, Prominent Labor Leader and Union Organizer

"The Union Printing & Publishing Co., Denver, Colo., December 28, 1916.—Hon. John G. Cooper, M. C., Washington, D. C. Dear Sir: I have your letter of the 21st. You ask for information as to my opinion of prohibition in Colorado, and (2) what effect it has on the working people of the state and of the city (of Denver).

"(1) My personal opinion is likely to be prejudiced and warped by my own inclination. I have been a life-long teetotaler, and have for many years been opposed to the open saloon and opposed to the traffic in liquors of all kinds. When a member of the city council three years ago

in Denver I voted against an ordinance to license saloons, largely because I am opposed to the government deriving taxes from such sources. But temperance man that I am, I must say that the benefits that we have derived since we abolished the saloon are vastly greater than I had any reason to hope for. I am not alone in this. It is a conclusion that you hear on all sides, reached by men in every walk of life—professional, business, and labor.

"(2) In reciting the effect the new law has on the working people of the state I can truthfully begin by saying that the things that the liquor interests (and with them the banking and business interests) said would happen to labor and to business never happened at all. They said thousands of laboring men would be thrown out of employment if the saloons were closed. They said the brewery workers' unions would be destroyed, that the plumbers would find less work, that the cooks and waiters would walk the streets, that the musicians would find no jobs, that the barber chairs would

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VII.—Labor	XVII.—Pan America
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