

Secretary Balfour's Speech

A Washington dispatch, dated May 5, says: Arthur J. Balfour, British foreign minister, addressed the house of representatives today, as follows:

"Will you permit me on behalf of my friends and myself, to offer you my deepest and sincerest thanks for the rare and valued honor which you have done us by receiving us here today? We all feel the greatness of this honor, but I think to none of us can it come home so closely as to one who, like myself, has been for forty-three years in the service of a free assembly like your own.

"I rejoice to think that a member, a very old member I am sorry to say, of the British house of commons has been received here today by this great sister assembly with such kindness as you have shown to me and my friends.

"Ladies and Gentlemen — These two assemblies are the greatest and the oldest of the free assemblies now governing great nations in the world. The history indeed of the two is very different. The beginnings of the British house of commons go back to a dim historic past, and its full rights and status have only been conquered and permanently secured after centuries of political struggle.

"Your fate has been a happier one. You were called into existence at a much later stage of social development. You came into being complete and perfected and all your powers determined and your place in the Constitution secured beyond chance of revolution, but though the history of these two great assemblies is different, each of them represents the great democratic principle to which we look forward as the security of the future peace of the world. All of the free assemblies now to be found governing the great nations of the earth have been modeled either upon your practice or upon ours or upon both combined.

"Mr. Speaker, the compliment paid to the mission from Great Britain by such an assembly and upon such an occasion is one not one of us is ever likely to forget, but there is something, after all, even deeper and more significant in the circumstances under which I now have the honor to address you than any which arise out of the interchange of courtesies, however sincere, between two great and friendly nations.

"We all, I think, feel instinctively that this is one of the great moments in the history of the world and that what is now happening on both sides of the Atlantic represents the drawing together of great and free peoples for mutual protection against the aggression of military despotism.

"I am not one of those — none of you are among those — who are such bad democrats as to say that democracies make no mistakes. All free assemblies have made blunders, sometimes they have committed crimes. Why is it that we look forward to the spirit of free institutions, and especially among our present enemies, as one of the greatest guarantees of the future peace of the world? I will say to you, gentlemen, how it seems to me.

"It is quite true that the people and the representatives of the people may be betrayed by some momentary gust of passion into a policy which they ultimately deplore; but it is only a military despotism of the German type that can through generations, if need be, pursue steadily, remorselessly, unscrupulously and appallingly the object of dominating the civilization of mankind. And, mark you, this evil, this menace under which we are now suffering is not one which diminishes with the growth of knowledge and progress of material civilization, but on the contrary, it increases with them.

"When I was young we used to flatter ourselves that progress inevitably meant peace, and that growth of knowledge was always accompanied as its natural fruit by the growth of good will among the nations of the earth. Unhappily we know better now, and we know there is such a thing in the world as a power which can with unvarying persistency focus all the resources of knowledge and of civilization into the one great task of making itself the moral and material master of the world. It is

against that danger that we, the free people of western civilization, have banded ourselves together.

"It is in that great cause that we are going to fight and are fighting at this very moment side by side. In that cause we shall surely conquer and our children will look back to this fateful date as the one from which democracies can feel secure that their progress, their civilization, their rivalry, if need be, will be conducted not on German lines, but in the friendly and Christian spirit which really befits the age in which we live.

"Mr. Speaker, ladies and gentlemen, I beg most sincerely to repeat again how heartily I thank you for the cordial welcome which you have given us today and to repeat my profound sense of the significance of this unique meeting."

BIBLE TEST FOR IMMIGRANTS

For the literacy test of immigrants under the new law the Bible will be used, the department of labor announces. Passages will be selected in more than 100 languages and dialects so that practically every class of immigrant can be examined in the language with which he is familiar. The department statement says the Bible is not selected because it is considered a sacred book by many people, "but because it is now the only book in virtually every tongue. Translations of the Bible were made by eminent scholars, and, what is more to the point, the translating was done by men whose purpose it was to put the Bible in such simple and idiomatic expressions in the various foreign languages as would make it possible for the common people of foreign countries to grasp the meaning readily and thoroughly."

BRYAN'S OFFER STANDS ALONE

Former Secretary of State Bryan has established a unique record. Mr. Bryan is the first of the men prominent in the nation's affairs who has offered his services to the federal government, and expressed a willingness to serve as a private.

The war department has received offers of service from other men enjoying national reputations, but these patriots are not so modest as Mr. Bryan. They have offered to serve in any capacity from field marshal to general, but none, like Mr. Bryan, as a private.

Mr. Bryan's offer struck a responsive chord in the bosoms of the officials of the war department.—Washington Post.

Nebraska's legislature finally passed a prohibition law that its sponsors assert has put teeth into the amendment adopted last fall. Eighteen senators, sixteen democrats and two republicans, who composed the rearguard of the brewery politicians of the state, fought vainly for weeks to force the dry house to accept the senate amendments, every one of which was drawn in the interest either of the brewer or distiller or the men who fought prohibition in 1916 because they objected to being deprived of liquor. Only one important concession was made by the house, and that was practically forced by the attitude of Governor Neville. This permits persons to have in their homes a reasonable amount of liquor—no limit—but provides that possession, in case of a prosecution, shall be taken as prima facie evidence of an intent to violate the law.

The railroad companies of the country, following the rule of safety first, prohibit employes from drinking either on or off duty. If it finds out that they are using liquor at any time they are first warned, then fired. The government should adopt the same system in dealing with its army. The senate has voted to prohibit drinking only when in uniform. This is not a good way to secure that efficiency. The government ought to learn some lessons from industry.

The fact that there does not seem to be anything wrong with the health of the sultan of Turkey would appear to indicate some slipup in the theory that it is worry that kills.

SELLING LIQUOR TO SOLDIERS IN WAR TIME

[From the San Francisco Examiner.]

A deplorable situation exists in San Francisco as regards the "sealed package" liquor houses.

Under the municipal ordinance, as it now stands, the police commission is forced to grant licenses of this kind to all who make written application, regardless of the location and without respect for the wishes of the residents of the neighborhood where the business is to be established.

The police commission can not regulate or control these places after it has created them, and the only ground upon which it can revoke a "sealed package" license is because liquor has been drunk on the premises.

This is nothing less than absurd. It means that the city has created a nuisance which it does not give itself the power to abate. Such an ordinance should either be amended in accordance with the dictates of reason or repealed forthwith.

Theodore Roche, president of the police commission, wants it amended to bring the wholesalers under the control of the commission, to give the commission the right to limit the number of licenses that shall be issued, and to use a little discrimination in handing them out.

The board of supervisors should so amend the ordinance at the very next meeting.

The chief objection to the "sealed package" places now is their presence in large numbers in the vicinity of the Presidio. Some of the local authorities are firmly convinced that there should be no liquor selling establishments located anywhere near the Presidio. That is a sound view. Morally there is little difference between spiking a gun and loading a soldier with liquor. Saloonkeepers who weaken the manhood defense of the nation in these times ought to be dealt with severely and promptly.

The destructive effect of drink on the efficiency of an army is well known. There are now many soldiers in San Francisco, and others are constantly arriving. A large percentage are boys, many of them from the rural districts, getting their first taste of "life" in the city.

It is the duty of the civil and military authorities to guard these young recruits from harm while they are being trained to serve their country. And it is their duty to keep ever in mind the efficiency of our growing army.

Neither of these patriotic duties can be discharged by granting licenses to "sealed package" liquor houses to establish themselves within a stone's throw of the reservation, there to sell strong drink under the permit of the law and to dispense opium and other drugs when they can do so without being caught.

Let the police commission have control of these licenses in just the same way that it has control of the saloon licenses. There should be fixed responsibility so that there can be strict accountability.

The Nebraska house paid \$258 to have prayers said for it by a chaplain during the last session, while the Iowa house appropriated but \$88 for the purpose. If any Iowa man happens to suggest that the figures merely show the comparative needs of the two houses, a Nebraska man is at perfect liberty to retort that it seemed so great a waste of effort for a preacher to pray for an Iowa legislature that no minister would take more than \$88.

The American to whom posterity will delegate the task of writing the history of the United States between 1915 and 1920 will have a comparatively easy task if someone of today only has the forethought to list all the profoundly significant things our profoundly insignificant publicists have discovered as having occurred.

A good politician is generally supposed to be a chap who is always able, no matter what caused the explosion, to light on his feet. A little closer observation would disclose that the real ability shown was in not alighting on the feet of others.

War is beginning to pinch all classes. The mayor of New York has ordered the bars and restaurants where liquor is served in that city to close at 1 o'clock in the morning.