

# National Prohibition and National Patriotism

Both houses of congress have voted by decisive majorities in favor of prohibition. By more than the requisite two-thirds vote, congress has referred to the several states for ratification a constitutional amendment prohibiting the manufacture, sale, transportation, export or import of any kind of intoxicating liquors for beverage purposes anywhere in the United States.

Twenty-seven states are already dry, by vote of their state legislatures. It is reasonable to expect that all of these states will ratify the federal amendment. Then favorable action by only nine more states will be required. I believe the result will be achieved within three years.

In other words, when the constitutional amendment, which congress passed Dec. 17, has been approved by only nine of the following twenty-one states (assuming that those already dry have ratified it), the amendment will be carried:

California	New Jersey
Connecticut	New York
Delaware	Nevada
Florida	Ohio
Illinois	Pennsylvania
Kentucky	Rhode Island
Louisiana	Texas
Maryland	Vermont
Massachusetts	Wisconsin
Minnesota	Wyoming
Missouri	

## NEW ARGUMENT AGAINST SALOON

The war has added a third argument to the case against the saloon. The economic argument has been growing in force with the ages, and its strength has been greatly increased during the last few years. It is now demonstrated beyond the possibility of a doubt that alcohol is a poison which when taken into the system even in moderate quantities produces certain well-defined injurious effects. It causes diseases in the body and grows into an appetite which in turn increases the disease. It establishes a deadly circle and in the end totally destroys the health and vigor of the body.

Alcohol increasingly impairs the productive value of a man by depriving his brain of clearness and his nerves of steadiness. He misses the mark more frequently at target practice; he makes more mistakes in setting type; he is more often the victim of accident in industry; he finds when he applies for insurance that his life expectancy is lessened.

Each year adds a new count to the indictment. The community finds it more and more difficult to defend the licensing of an institution that can not live except as it does injury—an institution whose success is measured by its crimes against society. Employers find they can not entrust important business to a man who befuddles his brain with liquor, and mine operators plead for dry zones around their mines because the sale of liquor materially reduces the output.

## ONE REMEDY AT HAND

We are face to face with a condition that demands a remedy, and only one remedy is in sight, viz., the abolition of the saloon—a festering evil, the breeding center of crime and immorality. Why, if I may employ a brutal simile, do we appropriate money to exterminate cholera among hogs and then, for pay, license men to propagate delirium tremens among human beings? Why do we auction off, for a few hundred thousand dollars, the privilege of making paupers, criminals and insane, and then spend millions in an effort to care for the delinquents that graduate from the saloons?

The moral argument has been ever present throughout the centuries; but we are becoming more and more sensitive to it as ethical standards rise and the conscience is more and more awakened.

The saloon needs three things besides customers. It must have capital to run it, liquor to sell and—not less important than the other two—votes that permit it to exist.

The man who furnishes the capital receives interest or dividends on his money. The man who furnishes the liquor collects profits on his

product. But what does the man receive who furnishes the votes? Not interest, nor dividends, nor profits. His is the disgrace of being a secret partner in a business with which he would be ashamed to connect himself publicly, and he has less excuse for favoring the saloon than the distiller, the brewer and the liquor dealer.

## POLITICIAN WITHOUT EXCUSE

"The love of money," we are told, "is the root of all evil," and we know from the past that men have committed crimes of every kind for money. For money, some men have been willing to steal; for money, a few have even been willing to kill; on rare occasions a man, for money, has been willing to betray his country; and the Bible tells us of one man who, for money, was willing to betray the Master himself. But the man who, without pay, votes to keep the saloon in existence has not even the poor, miserable excuse that he is making a pecuniary profit out of the evil.

If one would know what moral responsibility he assumes when he sides with the saloon, let him put down in black and white his confession, viz., that he knows the saloon to be an evil and that, without knowing who his partners in the business will be, he is willing to share moral responsibility with them for all the harm that the saloon does; and then let him leave a space below his name so that he can write, "I am the partner of the man who sold the liquor" when he reads in the newspapers instances where the saloon has made drunkards out of young men, has robbed a wife of her husband, children of their father and sometimes has even taken from the home wives and daughters.

## PATRIOTIC APPEAL LARGE

But the patriotic argument will appeal to many who have resisted the economic argument and been deaf to the appeal to conscience.

The government is trying to protect its soldiers by making it a criminal offense to sell intoxicating liquor to a man in uniform; and yet so shameless are those engaged in the traffic that they violate the law whenever they think they see a prospect of escape from punishment. So much greater is their passion for dollars than their patriotism that they would, if they could, make drunkards of the entire army, and leave us defenseless before a foreign foe.

The law against selling to soldiers is in itself a terrible indictment of alcohol. This protection is not thrown around the soldier because he is a weakling, for the soldiers are the pick of our young men. It would be an insult to our soldiers to say that liquor is denied them because they are below the average man in resisting power. No; the law is an indictment against alcohol, and, being an indictment against alcoholic beverages, it can be used to support prohibition at home, as well as in the army.

The food producer and the maker of munitions are as necessary to the winning of the war as the soldier himself. The man at the front must be supplied with food, and with the weapons of war. If we would keep the nation's strength at its maximum, we can no more afford to permit the liquor dealer to rob our farmers and artisans of their efficiency than we can afford to allow him to paralyze the usefulness of the men in arms.

## CANNOT SPARE FOODSTUFFS

There is another economic argument whose increasing weight is being daily more and more recognized, viz., that we can not spare the foodstuffs that have heretofore been converted into alcoholic liquors. We have already taken one step toward conservation; we have prohibited the conversion of foodstuffs into alcohol during the war. But this saves only one-third of the waste. The brewers have been using about twice as much of our foodstuffs in the making of beer as the distillers use in the making of whiskey. Why not save three-thirds, instead of one-third? It would strengthen our appeal to the housewives if we could show that we were saving on a large scale by denying to the brewers the bread needed for the table. To urge an increase in garden space while we turn over to the brewers the

product of broad and fertile prairies looks like "saving at the spigot and wasting at the bung-hole."

Prohibition ought to triumph on economic grounds alone. It ought to triumph even more surely on moral grounds; it can not fail to triumph now, since it is also demanded by patriotism and by the spirit of democracy.

The ratification of the amendment by the states within seven years, as required by the joint resolution of congress submitting it, seems certain.

It must be remembered that in most cases it is easier to ratify a national amendment than it is to originate an amendment for a state constitution. While it only requires a majority to ratify a national amendment it usually requires a three-fifths or two thirds vote of a state legislature to carry a state amendment.

It must also be remembered that on such a moral question as prohibition the country districts have a greater weight in a legislature than in a popular vote, because the big wet majorities in the large cities do not have such a dominating representation in the legislatures.

W. J. BRYAN.

## AN ANONYMOUS LETTER

Dear Mr. Bryan,

Just a word of humble apology for past misdemeanors and crimes, hearty congratulations and a warm handshake across the editorial table.

You win—100 points.

We've cussed you, cartooned you, dad-burned you these many years, and now we doff our millinery to you.

From today's New York Sun:

### "THE MAN WHO WINS BY LOSING"

"The price of silver, which in 1896 was about 73 cents an ounce, is now about 87 cents.

"Prohibition awaits the judgment of the states.

"Government control, if not ownership, of railroads is here.

"What democrat, peering into the future for a presidential candidate for his party in 1920, can see any features more distinguishable than those of Mr. Bryan?

"He could be nominated on the strength of what has been accomplished after the fact of his defeats.

"But perhaps the next democratic national convention will be operated by a director general of politics."

And we've just threshed 'er all out here in this bit of a newspaper fo'castle, and polled a majority vote for you in 1920.

THE BUNCH.

(From a newspaper editorial room, New York, December 29, 1917.)

## HYLAN SAYS HE GOT WHITMAN'S PLEDGE

[From The New York World, Dec. 18.]

Gov. Whitman agrees with Mayor-elect Hylan that a bill should be put through at the coming session of the legislature providing that the contributions to all political campaign funds should be made public five days before election.

At a conference between the governor and the mayor-elect in Albany yesterday, Governor Whitman told Judge Hylan he would affix his signature to a bill of that nature should it be passed by the legislature.

Judge Hylan urged Mr. Whitman to favor a measure of this sort after the two had discussed what Judge Hylan described as the "outrageously extravagant" expenditures of the fusion campaign committee during the mayoralty election.

Democratic Senate Leader Wagner already has stated that he will father a bill containing these features: The governor's announcement that he favors such a measure, in the view of politicians, makes it practically certain that the two houses of the legislature will put it through.

The farmer who has to pay forty and fifty cents a pound at the meat market for the hog that he shipped to Chicago for fifteen cents a pound may be pardoned for refusing to believe that the development of transportation and the progress of invention have been of much practical benefit to mankind.

What in the world will most of the state legislatures have to do next winter when there are no railroads at hand for them to pass regulatory bills for?