

The War Against Alcohol

So far as we are concerned in the United States, the movements of various kinds and forms against the almost immeasurable evil resulting from the habitual use of alcohol are now approaching their culmination. A few months ago, exercising the war power, the government stopped the making of whiskey. It has now, by a similar order, reduced the alcoholic content of beer to something like the vanishing point. Within a very few years the number of states prohibiting the liquor traffic has increased from three or four to twenty-seven. The great state of Ohio, which has always heretofore been strongly against prohibition, was almost evenly divided in November of this year, the votes for prohibition being something under 523,000 and the votes against it being just over 524,000. The complete abolition of the liquor traffic in the city of Washington and the District of Columbia went into effect only a few weeks ago by act of congress, with excellent results already apparent.

Hitherto, the prohibition movement has proceeded in localities under the local option system, and in states under the plan of state-wide prohibition. Those states which have adopted prohibition are now, by virtue of recent federal laws, better protected than they formerly were from the violation of their own police systems by the bringing in of liquor from adjacent states.

A few years ago it would not have been thought possible by most observers and students of politics that

we were approaching the eve of submission by congress to the legislatures of the states of an amendment to the national constitution, prohibiting the liquor traffic throughout the United States. But already the anti-saloon movement has actually won that victory. The prohibition amendment, under the leadership of Senator Morris Sheppard, of Texas, was adopted in the United States senate last summer, and on December 17 it was passed by the house of representatives by a vote of 282 to 128. There had never been any dispute as to the attitude of the present house, while there was some question whether or not the necessary two-thirds majority could be obtained in the senate. When the amendment has been accepted by three-fourths of the states it will become a part of the national constitution. This means that thirty-six states must consent to nationwide suppression of the making of and traffic in liquor as a beverage.

Besides this great movement for state and national prohibition of the liquor traffic, many other indications are to be noted of a growing purpose to emancipate America from alcoholism. A few years ago Secretary Daniels was ridiculed for steps taken by him to remove the drink evil from the navy, and similarly there was great controversy over the canteen question, as relates to the army. At the present time the war department has the moral support of the professional army men in determined efforts, not only to keep liquor out of the camps and away from the mil-

itary reservations, but also to abolish saloons in the immediate vicinity of the cantonments and other army posts.

The social habits of the people, furthermore, have been greatly changed through influences due to moral and industrial leadership. The railroads have long demanded abstinence on the part of their employees. Many other industrial and business organizations have taken the same stand. Not only drunkenness, but even the moderate use of liquor is now frowned upon by a great majority of responsible business men. The proper use of the various instruments of modern business — telegraph, telephone, electric transportation, and many others—are all at war against so obvious an enemy of efficiency as alcoholic drink. The great growth of interest in athletic sports is also a factor making for temperance. Thus many forces and influences are now co-operating to bring the alcoholic evil under something like adequate control, although its complete suppression, so far as individuals are concerned, may not be possible for a good while to come.

Among the veteran workers in this movement for temperance and for the outlawing of the drinking saloon, no one has earned a more worthy place than the Reverend Dr. Ferdinand C. Iglehart. As an eloquent speaker, he is known throughout the country; and as a writer his words have gone to the homes of millions. He has known many public men and has had a hand in political affairs, as well as a voice among the churches and a pen at the service of the religious press. We have now, as Dr. Iglehart's latest contribution to the cause which has claimed a lifetime's effort, a little volume entitled, "King Alcohol Dethroned." It is not a systematic treatise, nor is it a history of the temperance movement. It contains arguments and it also embodies history; but it is a unique book in its plan, and it reflects much of the special knowledge and varied contacts of the writer himself.

Thus we have chapters on the mental and physical effects of alcohol as proved by scientific tests. The who world seems now convinced of the uselessness of alcohol and its detrimental nature when used as a beverage. Dr. Iglehart has obtained for the purposes of his book the expressions of many men of experience and knowledge; so that his chapters, for example, upon alcohol in respect to the efficiency of industry and of labor, reflect the best current opinion.

Perhaps the most interesting part of the book are two chapters devoted to Lincoln's attitude on this question. Few people are aware that Abraham Lincoln was a great temperance leader in Illinois, and that he was the most active man in the group that secured the state-wide vote of Illinois on prohibition in the year 1855. It was by only a few thousand votes that Lincoln and his friends failed to carry the state at that time. President Lincoln was a total abstainer, did not allow the use of liquor in the White house, and stood always for every phase of opposition to the use of alcoholic drink.

Dr. Iglehart was a friend of Theodore Roosevelt when the Colonel was at the head of the police commission under Mayor Strong, in New York, and made his fight for the closing of the saloons on Sunday. We have an interesting chapter on that episode in the present book. There is one devoted to Mr. Bryan as a prohibition champion, and there are several instructive chapters dealing with the abolition of the saloon in the south, with prohibition in the west, with federal legislation, and with the world-wide war on alcohol. It would

seem to us desirable that Dr. Iglehart should in future editions of this book include a new chapter on the efforts of the present administration to banish alcohol from the army and navy, and to prevent the use of grain and food materials in the making of stimulating beverages.

Dr. Iglehart is a generous fighter and is free from that narrowness which has marred, rather than helped, the work of some temperance reformers. We would suggest, therefore, that he might also collect data for an additional chapter, showing with what ingenuity and good temper many of the distillers and brewers are adapting their plants to more useful and timely purposes than the making of alcoholic beverages, and also how many thousands of saloon-keepers have been turning their retail places into restaurants, grocery stores, cigar stores, shoe and clothing shops, and so on. A few months ago Seattle's remarkable transformation in this respect was recounted in the press. Our capital city of Washington is now going through the same experience. An enormous saving in these times will be accomplished by ridding the streets of the many thousands of heavy wagons and trucks sent out from the breweries on their daily rounds to the saloons. More necessary forms of trade should absorb all such wasteful activities.—
Review of Reviews.

Miami, Fla., Jan. 1st, 1918.

Mr. Frederick C. Iglehart,
Bible House, New York.

My dear Sir,

I write to thank you for the great service you have rendered the cause of temperance and prohibition in giving to the public the results of your experience and observation in the book entitled "King Alcohol Dethroned."

It comes out just at the right time to aid in securing the ratification of the amendment recently submitted. It deserves, and I doubt not will have, a large sale.

And what joy you must feel in the certainty of an early victory for the reform for which you have toiled so long and so faithfully! You have been a pioneer in the greatest moral movement of this generation; and,

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