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EDITORIAL PAGE OF

The Washington Times

(ARTHUR BRISBANE, Editor and Owner)

Dear William Jennings Bryan

Will You Answer One Prohibition Question?

We would not willingly disturb Colonel Bryan, who is now eating oranges and custard pie in the pleasant climate of Miami, Fla., after having forced congress to pass a constitutional amendment that would put workmen on an ice water basis.

We disturb him only a moment to quote an extract from his little article on prohibition recently published:

"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 soldier 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."

Since you wrote that, Colonel Bryan, you and the rest of the country have heard from General Pershing, in charge of the American army in France.

You learn that General Pershing, who has the intelligence lacking in certain prohibitionists, and knows enough to discriminate between a deadly poison and the harmless, customary beverages, PERMITS THE SOLDIERS TO USE LIGHT WINE AND BEER. Etc. \* \* \*

Let Colonel Bryan spend the winter in Florida, eating custard pie, sucking oranges, drinking ice water, and suffering from dyspepsia if he wishes—that is his right. Etc. \* \* \*

Dear Arthur Brisbane

Question Answered With Pleasure.

Your kind letter of Dec. 28th., "entered as second class matter at the Postoffice at Washington, D. C.," duly received.

You flatter me. Congress was not "forced" by any one—it submitted the amendment out of democratic deference to the wishes of constituents.

But, sweet as is your undeserved praise, you offset it by doing injustice to my health. Indigestion is unknown to me and I have so little fondness for custard pie that I am willing to

eschew it entirely, if by so doing I can be restored to that place in your affections which I never held.

The extract which you quote from my "little article on prohibition" does not disturb me even for a moment—neither does your question. The answer is very easy. You have simply fallen into the error of allowing the opinion of ONE MAN, who, you think, agrees with you, to outweigh the opinion of a majority of the American people, expressed through their representatives. This error, while not uncommon, is unfortunate at this time when war is so forcibly bringing out the contrast between autocracy and democracy. It is not only unfortunate, but risky, because, having built your argument entirely upon General Pershing's supposed opinion, you will be in an awkward position if he was misquoted or rescinds the order which has evoked your enthusiasm. You will be somewhat like the young lawyer who, having confined his study to the statutes of his state, was warned by his instructor that a legislature might repeal all he knew.

In fact, the same mail that brought me your cherished epistle, also brought an extract from the Washington Evening Star of Dec. 29th which contained an Associated Press dispatch written on Dec. 28th by a representative who is "with the American Army in France."

Under the startling headline, "Pershing May Make His Army Bone Dry," the correspondent says, "Gen Pershing, in an interview with correspondents today, said the question of prohibiting the sale of all intoxicating liquors to American troops, which he favors, is being discussed with the French government."

Think of it, my dear Arthur, the very day you published your letter chiding me for taking the side of the American people against the purported opinion of one general, that very general is quoted by a representative of the press—and the ASSOCIATED PRESS, at that—as favoring the prohibition of the sale of all intoxicating liquors to American troops and is discussing the subject with the French government. If you excommunicate me because of my humble part in support of prohibition, what will you do to an American general who has the temerity to take the same position in France "where the water supply is not as pure as ours," and where they have no "custard pie" to substitute for your favorite beverages, "light wine and beer.?"

Cheer up, Arthur, "the worst is yet to come,"—that is, national prohibition which you so dread; but you will in time, when the temptation is put far from you, agree with the other Wise Man that wine is a mocker.

W. J. BRYAN.

Three years ago 26 per cent of all the families and individuals aided by the Des Moines associated charities were in a condition of poverty through the drunkenness of the father or supporting member of the household; says the Capital. A year and a half after the saloons closed there, the percentage had fallen to 10 per cent. These figures, however, will not appear in the literature the brewers are getting out to fight national prohibition with, for the reason that they do not substantiate the declaration such literature always carries that prohibition doesn't prohibit and that liquor-drinking has no connection with poverty.

The packers have been exposed by the federal trade commission as profiteers in leather and hides, but exposure has been so often made in the past that they have become accustomed to the chill winds of criticism. A man who has increased his net profits from 200 to 500 per cent can listen to a lot of perfervid sentences without having a change of heart, but it might be a good idea to experiment with a few court sentences and see what would happen.

You understand, of course, that the fact that Secretary Baker recently declared that he had not been converted to the idea of a universal military training system in this country after the war had nothing whatever to do with the attitude towards him of the colonel and Senator Chamberlain.

It is still being insisted that democracy is making rapid strides in Germany. Which raises the interesting question, how long is a democratic stride in kaiserland?

GRAND OLD MAN OF THE ANTI-SALOON LEAGUE

[From The American Issue, December 28, 1917.]

Twenty-five years ago he was called an idle dreamer and a fanatic. Many of his friends thought him foolish to abandon a brilliant career for the uncertain pathway trod by the reformer. A few, very few, friends backed him with meager funds which he spent for the cause and not for himself.

He came to Columbus and rented a one-room office. He pawned his watch not once but many times, to get something to eat. He decided he did not need an overcoat and that the old suit would do for another season.

He prayed, planned and worked. He kindled the fires of local option throughout Ohio. He spoke to audiences on every possible occasion, and many of them received his message coldly or with indifference. The greater the obstacle, the greater his determination to overcome it. Throughout the months and years of his grueling and seemingly hopeless task, he kept his eyes firmly fixed on the goal—national prohibition. He never wavered in his purpose. He never thought of turning back. He was of the heroic type. If he became discouraged, the world never knew it. He had a smile and kindly word for all—even for those who maligned him.

The fierce light that beat upon the throne found no flaw in his armor, no stain on his shield. The most virulent enemies of the cause for which he fought never assailed his character, for it was invulnerable. Through the years of trial he stood, as he stands today, without spot or blemish. And yet his blows were those of a giant and he never gave nor asked quarter. With him it was a battle of right against wrong and he had the simple faith of a child that right would conquer.

It is not often that the founder of a great reform lives to see it accomplished. This instance is believed to be an exception. This man has lived to see his great idea sweep the country, making cities and states dry, and dominating the national capital and the political parties. He has lived to see his dream fulfilled in the action of congress submitting national prohibition to the states. He has lived to see his idea endorsed by science and medicine, by the world of business and of industry. He has lived to see capital and labor standing shoulder to shoulder, in advocacy of the principles for which he struggled through the years. Governors, senators, and congressmen—leaders of thought and action, are now standing with him, praising him and congratulating him.

And throughout the land, in thousands of homes, men and women who have been and are now beneficiaries of this man's dream, thank him and pray that God will spare him to see his dream fully realized, and that before he passes on he may be permitted to witness a stainless flag floating over a saloonless nation.

Howard H. Russell, Grand Old Man of the Anti-Saloon League, we salute you!

NOW, THEN, ALL TOGETHER!



—Raleigh, N. C., News and Observer.