

that they accept the proposition, the doctrine and plan of prohibition as applied to the liquor traffic.

In the *Journal* for December 20, Mr. J. C. Watters, addressing a labor meeting, demanded not only reduction of licenses in Ottawa, but the "abolition of all bars"—that is prohibition. Despite these facts, Rev. W. B. Thompson, as reported in the local papers for December 15, said, "I would like to know who ever mentioned prohibition." We are fighting for a reduction in the number of licenses, but nothing has been said about prohibition. It is certainly too bad that the good Mr. Thompson failed to read what McElroy and Watters and Learoyd and Rev. Brown said about "wiping out all licenses within three years," and "cutting the dog's tail off just behind his ears," too bad that he could not complete his denial that prohibition is the issue in this campaign, without contradicting himself. A little later in the same speech, Mr. Thompson said, in denouncing the arguments printed in the local papers and signed "Ottawa Business Men's Association"—in denouncing the writer of these articles, the Reverend gentleman declared: "To what depths has that man fallen; has the person a spark of manhood left who can bring himself to write over his own signature that it is an immoral and un-Christian principle to PROHIBIT a traffic that he knows is destroying human lives." The good man, trying to wear a mask, lets it fall in the presence of the people. He declares for prohibition of this traffic, and denounces the man who attempts to defend it, or to write these articles and arguments, as a specimen of fallen manhood, because he dares to attack prohibition. He said that he knew it would destroy human life. Well, can you prohibit everything that destroys life?

Look at the railways in this country. We believe in regulating the railways, not in abolishing them. License means regulation; prohibition, abolition. Fire has a dual nature, causes great loss of property and much suffering; but fire is a good thing when regulated, when confined in a stove or in a furnace. The hotel keeper is the regulator. License, ladies and gentlemen, is the instrument or furnace by which we control the liquor business. (Applause.)

Again, water causes great suffering and much loss of life. What are you going to do about it? Prohibit the use of water? Hardly. Look at the Johnstown flood in the United States, the Galveston tidal wave, the floods in the Ohio valley last spring. You remember the flood recorded in the Bible. There was only one man and his family saved; and Noah, after the tidal wave, planted a vineyard, raised some grapes, made some wine, misjudged his capacity and got drunk. Which goes to prove that the only man saved from that flood was a wet man. (Applause.) The Lord drowned all the prohibitionists. (Laughter.) They wanted water, and he gave them water, but the fact that they got too much water is not a good excuse for prohibiting its use.

License of the liquor traffic corresponds with the banks of a river; it means regulation, control. Prohibition would build a dam right across the tide. What do you think that means? Well, go out in some of the dry sections, and you will see it means an overflow. If it is reasonable to have banks and ditches to confine the flow of a river, why, it is unreasonable to build prohibition dams across the flood. (Applause.)

I will show you that there is nothing in the prohibition idea, not a blessed thing. Oh, but you say that lives are lost on account of alcoholism, and we have some wonderful figures on this point. You hear one prohibition orator and he tells you that "50,000 people die annually in Canada and the United States on account of alcoholism". You hear another the next day and he puts the number at 75,000. Go to another dry meeting the third night, and the orator will tell you the number is 100,000. Go again, and the orator will tell you the number is 125,000, and if you should hear Hobson, Congressman from Alabama in our country, he would tell you that the number is 700,000. Now, wouldn't they agree? If they were quoting from any reliable, any official record, they would have to agree. They deceive people. If you believe one, you cannot believe the other. They ought to get together and have a joint debate on that question, and determine the true number that do die annually on account of alcoholism, and then go before the people and tell the simple truth and not deceive them.

Whether a man says it is 50,000 or 700,000 depends on the degree of his intoxication on prohibition. Now, do we have any reliable figures on the question? Well, the most reliable, and I have them right there in my grip, are figures furnished by the United States Census Bureau, and we are informed that less than 3,000 people die per annum from alcoholism in the United States—