

We are agreed that the use of intoxicating liquors as a beverage is wrong.

We are also agreed that it is quite as wrong to engage in their manufacture or sale.

But we are not agreed that it is a great deal worse for us to consent to other people's making and selling liquor than to do it ourselves. Or rather, we do not all admit that we are directly responsible for the saloon and the liquor traffic! But, nevertheless, it is still a fact that we are responsible, not only for the saloon, but all that the saloon does; and there is only one way to relieve ourselves of that responsibility.

The saloon and the liquor traffic are the creatures of law. The license system which is the present policy of our Government towards the liquor business provides for the perpetuation and protection of the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors by law. Our Legislators enact the laws and our various executive officers enforce them—or don't enforce them! And the people choose the officials of Government, ostensibly to do their bidding.

The foundation principles of our Government, then, are such that we may know in advance just what policy a public servant is going to pursue in important matters; so that we have no excuse for sanctioning an institution that we do not approve of.

How, then, about the legalized saloon? We know by sad experience just what its character is, and we know beforehand, just what must, of very necessity, be the natural and unavoidable result of its existence and operation. Therefore, if we fail to vote in opposition to the saloon, we make ourselves directly responsible for the saloon, and all that the saloon does.

But, I seem to hear a criticism from all parts of the house, to the effect that we are not here to consider the saloon, but to consider the moral question, of how we can help the poor drunkard. To which I may reply, that I know of no phase of the question more intrinsically moral, or even religious, than

that which I have considered; neither do I know any way to help the poor drunkard more quickly or more effectively, than the way I have described.

But many say we ought to have Gospel temperance meetings, and try to influence the drinker to break away from the habit that enchains him, and to turn his back on the temptation which is luring him to destruction. I tell you, Friends, the time has not come yet, when we can confine ourselves to talking temperance to the drunkard. Verily, there *is* need for Gospel temperance meetings, but they should be to impress the *people* with their responsibility in this matter, and to teach the value and significance of a vote.

When the four million professing Christians of this land have done so *small* a thing as to unite for the overthrow of the legalized drink traffic, then, and not till then, can they consistently ask the poor, weak drunkard to do so *great* a thing as to break away from the tyrant drink.

Think of it, Friends, 240,000 saloons in this country to-day, established by law, with a perfect understanding of their destructive nature, and no united effort by the so-called Christian church to oppose them. Is this the way to manifest that love for each other, which was to be the badge by which all men should know that we are His disciples? What a scathing commentary this is on our profession? No wonder Religion is falling into disrepute, and men like Robert G. Ingersoll are questioning the claims of Christianity.

Just what shall we do, then, to relieve ourselves of responsibility in this matter? First, do our part towards removing the temptation; that is, vote to make the liquor business illegal, which implies, that we *stop* voting to make it legal. At the same time, vote for officers who are pledged to execute the law. Then our political duty will be done, for we will no longer be responsible for the great tempter, and we can give ourselves, with a clear conscience, to the rescue of the fallen.

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