

Prohibition drives underground the mischief which it seeks to cure, making it more difficult to deal with the evil and impossible to regulate the trade, as for instance, in the quality of the liquor sold.

These are words that we should weigh well before committing this country to a law which has proven disastrous in many states across the border. Many eminent men have said that after the law came into force it not only failed to prevent the sale of drink, but led to pernicious drug habits which are a thousand times worse than the drink evil.

No legislation has been more extensively and fairly tested than prohibition. For from forty to sixty years it has been tried out across the border in several states. We must judge it therefore, by its record, by what it has done and what it has not done. What do we find by looking up the records? It can be summed up in three capital "F's"—Failure, folly and farce. It has not abolished the liquor traffic or lessened the consumption of liquor, or lessened the evils of intemperance. There is one service, however, that it has rendered to society—it has furnished, a warning example of the supreme folly of attempting to legislate virtue into men's lives. A great many people who oppose prohibition are prone to make the mistake of concluding that all those who are opposed to the moderate use of liquor in any shape or form are fanatics. They are not. There may be one here or there in the ranks, but there are hundreds of others who merely recognize the existence of the same evil, as most of us recognize, that is the moral degeneracy that follows the abuse of liquor, and these same people who see no way of curing it conclude that it is incurable, and that therefore there is no other remedy left but to complete the destruction of the source from which they believe the evil emanates. Many of the states of the Union that voted prohibition years ago have gone back to license and regulation, and have found to their sorrow that they had built on false hopes, and that conditions were not only no better but far worse under prohibition than under license.

A great many moral reformers and prohibitionists claim that even the moderate drinker, or in other words the man who uses God's gifts properly and does not abuse them, is not the equal of the out-and-out teetotaler, and that wine, even in limited quantities, has a tendency to dull the faculties, to impair the strength and aggravate disease.

[Mr. Weichel.]

No doubt many of these good people admire Charles Dickens, and I am sure that only pity must be expressed for the individual who does not find the works of Dickens alluring. That world-renowned author once stated that the cause of temperance was not promoted by any intemperate measures, but that it was intemperate conduct to assert that fermented liquors should not be taken at all, for when taken in excess they did harm.

When reading an article of Colonel Henry Watterson of the Louisville Courier-Journal I was struck by the following paragraph

Any form of prohibition or restriction bears most heavily upon the poorer classes, the rich being always able to secure all the potions they wish.

No one can question the sincerity of Mr. Gladstone's quotation when urged to join in the temperance propaganda. He said:

How can I, who have drunk good wine and bitter beer all my life in a comfortable room and among friends, coolly stand up and advise hard-working fellow-creatures to take the pledge?

Several years prior to his severe illness, the Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain undertook a trip to the United States, and being a man of keen perception, the following statement by him will no doubt be of interest to those who advocate prohibition for this country:

I have seen prohibition at work in the United States of America, and I rely in regard to it much more upon information I have obtained from impartial intelligent people than I do even on my own observation, and the evidence I have received from such persons, so thoroughly disinterested, is to the same effect that in towns at any rate anything in the nature of compulsory prohibition of drinking is absolutely impossible, and it only leads to drinking in a worse form than under the old system.

The late Justin McCarthy once made the statement that the prohibition law in Canada and the United States was a gross and ludicrous imposture. To think that to take a drink is wrong is to cast doubt and dishonour on the lives of our forefathers, and is, in my estimation, worse than an insult to their memory, because in years past it was considered no crime for a man to use the good gifts of God in moderation. But the things which are now countenanced in this twentieth century, as, for instance, the ill manners of the young towards their elders, profanity, commercializing religion were frowned upon as greater evils. These men who toiled day and night, who cleared the trackless forests, and who laid the