

this country, less friction between capital and labour, and more progress and stability all along the line. There are other evils in this world of a far greater and more pernicious character than drinking a glass of wine or beer. Gossip, the vile abomination so freely indulged in, has ruined more reputations and characters than all the evils for which drunkenness is responsible, and clothed in its puritanical robes of sham and hypocrisy, men and women are to-day hardly safe from its malignant influence. What about the social evil which has laid low many a young and promising life brought ruin and disaster and shame to many a home? Can Governments enact laws that will prevent men and women from going to destruction by legislating for them that they must not do this, or they must not do that? Are these things not a matter of conscience? If the moral reformer has no right to lay down rules and laws of conduct regarding these matters, to men and women, what right has he got to dictate to men and women what they should drink, eat or wear? Let us realize that we are not living exactly in an ideal world but in a practical one. What is God's law? It tells us to be good in ourselves, that we should be moderate in all things; that everything was good that was made in the beginning, and that it is the abuse of things that is wrong and not the use of them, because the laws we enact can only restrain us from doing wrong to others.

Remember that no law ever placed on the Statute books will suppress your thoughts or desires or your appetite. Untold damage will be done if laws are made with this object in view. By one stupendous forward push these well-meaning but over-zealous moral reformers are trying to bring humanity to a state of perfection, and the most distressing spectacle is presented to us by some men who, not having the moral courage to voice their opinions on these important matters, to please others, swim with the tide. In prohibition states across the border many openly professed allegiance to the cause, but made a farce of it when it became law. Bishop Gailor of Tennessee says about prohibition:

Many people thought state-wide prohibition to be the ideal remedy. Instead of calling to their aid some experts on the subject and having laws framed that could be enacted without force, they passed through the legislature a measure that has led to civic degeneracy. It is impracticable, and this violation is productive of shameful evils. You cannot pass laws that way. The reformer should leave law making to wise ex-

perts and be content with educating public sentiment.

Cardinal Gibbons, one of the most eminent prelates who ever adorned the Catholic Church, has this to say:

The establishment of prohibition in Chicago or other large cities would be impracticable and would put a premium on the sale of intoxicating drinks. When a law is frequently and habitually violated it brings legislation into contempt. It creates a spirit of deception and hypocrisy, and prompts men to do insidiously and by stealth what they would otherwise do openly and above board. You cannot legislate men by civil action into the performance of good and righteous deeds.

I honestly believe that prohibition is not necessary to make the world sober. Economic considerations force a man to be temperate. No one trusts a man who habitually drinks to excess, nor can he hold a job, nor can he get life insurance, and if he seeks the company of idlers he will find that he cannot find much company because the sober men are all at work. I do not believe that anything is to be gained to-day by a drum-beating, bell-ringing prohibition campaign to stir up strife and force divisions among the Canadian people. Is it not enough that we are in the midst of a world war so awful that it is almost terrifying? Is this the time to bring before the people an issue that for the present at least should be shelved? And, Sir, would it be fair to ask Parliament to vote on a measure of this kind without giving consideration to the quarter of a million men who are to-day ready and willing to make the supreme sacrifice if necessary? Even should they be allowed to vote this is no time for dissension. Should we not be better employed in looking after these men at the front who are so valiantly upholding the honour of this country, and who are doing everything possible to end this cruel struggle? We must be united at the present time, and we want nothing to interfere with the unity of purpose that animates the Canadian people to-day. A general election has been averted, thanks to the foresight and common-sense of those in authority, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific the people felt relieved that the Government and the Opposition were one on this matter, as a general election would have been harmful to every interest in Canada. But I also believe that to divide the people on this issue would be more disastrous still.

I place a great deal of confidence in the statements made by eminent men on matters of this kind. Bishop Hall of Vermont expresses his view in the following language: