

financial greed of a few who are desirous to reform a man's habits and desires by the enactment of certain legislation and federal laws. Others in this debate have quoted the opinions of eminent men. I suppose I may be allowed a similar privilege. First, I will give the opinion of Archdeacon Farrar, the eminent clergyman of the Church of England.

I have never asserted anything so wrong and so foolish as that it is a sin to drink wine, nor have I ever been so uncharitable, and gone so far beyond my legitimate warrant as to pronounce a syllable of condemnation against those who are called "moderate drinkers." The question of abstinence or non-abstinence is one which can be settled only by the individual conscience.

Pascal, the great ornament of French literature, said:

To go beyond the bounds of moderation is to outrage humanity. The greatness of the human soul is shown by knowing how to keep within proper bounds. So far from greatness consisting of going beyond its limits it really consists in keeping within them.

James Madison, one of the greatest men of the United States:

It is of great importance to a republic not only to guard society against the oppression of its rulers, but to guard one part of society against the oppression of the other. Justice is the end of government; it is the end of civil society.

Dr. Parkhurst, the eloquent preacher, said:

I am decidedly of the opinion that the more wine there is produced in this country and the more freely it is transported from state to state the smaller will be the amount of drunkenness.

When Massachusetts had a prohibition law, conditions were so bad that the following will be interesting—from Jno. A. Andrew, Massachusetts' famous governor:

Do you tell me, however, that all such beverages, in their most innocent use, involve a certain danger; that possibly any one may, probably many, and certainly some will, abuse it, and thus abuse themselves; and by consequence, that all men, as a matter of prudence, and therefore of duty, ought to abstain from and reject it? I answer: That is a question of morals, for the answer to which we must resort to the Bible, or to the church, or to the teachings of moral philosophy. The right to answer it at all, or to pretend to any opinion upon it, binding the citizen, has never been committed by the people, in any free government on earth, to the decision of the secular power. If the state can pass between the citizen and his church, his Bible, his conscience and God, upon questions of his own personal habits, and decide what he shall do, on merely moral ground, then it has authority to invade the domain of thought, as well as of private life, and prescribe bounds of freedom of conscience.

[Mr. Weichel.]

There is no barrier, in principle, where the Government must stop, short of the establishment of a state church prescribed by law, and maintained by persecution.

Do you tell me that the using of wine or beer as a beverage, however temperately, is of dangerous tendency, by reason of its example? Do you insist that the temperate use of it by one man may be pleaded by another as the occasion and apology for its abuse? I answer: That if the Government restrains the one man of his just rational liberty to regulate his private conduct and affairs, in matters innocent in themselves, wherein he offends not against peace, public decorum, good order, nor the personal rights of any, then the Government both usurps undelegated powers and assumes to punish one man in advance for the possible fault of another. The argument that because one man may offend another must be restrained is the lowest foundation of tyranny, the cornerstone of despotism. Liberty is never denied to the people anywhere on the ground that liberty is denied to the good or right, in itself. The universal pretext of every despotism is, that liberty is dangerous to society—that is, that the people are unfit to enjoy it.

Do you tell me that these arguments have a tendency indirectly to encourage and defend useless and harmful drinking, and that silence would have been better; for the sake of a great and holy cause? I answer: That He who governs the universe and created the nature of man, who made freedom a necessity of his development, and the capacity to choose between good and evil the crowning dignity of His reason, knew better than to trust it to the expedients of political society. The great and holy cause of emancipation from vice and moral bondage, is moral, and not political.

Let us learn to speak and hear the truth regarding these things, which so many would like to do, but so many dare not express. Canada is too big, too cosmopolitan, to be enslaved by a few zealots. Let the men who today are fighting for those liberties we love to talk about have the right to vote on this issue to preserve them. Do not disfranchise nor insult them by neglecting to give them an opportunity to express their opinions on this most vital matter. Wait until the struggle is over.

The big issue is the war, and nothing should interfere which might be a detriment to unity. When men dare to make the supreme sacrifice for us who stay at home, when they renounce position, comfort, and everything else that makes life pleasant and worth while in this world, then let us be brave enough to grant to them the privileges of citizenship and to take a common sense view of the situation by appreciating their efforts on the battle front and to such an extent that rather than pass laws regarding their conduct, as future citizens of Canada, let us devote our energies to the final and speedy completion of the war by doing everything possible in men and money to bring about this happy solution.