

the cause of the helpless against this destroying fiend.

I am aware, however, that speaking never so strongly is not going to affect the evil unless it shall result in bringing our personal responsibility so clearly before us as to set us to work to oppose the evil, and prevent the ever-increasing crime and misery which are always and everywhere the legitimate fruits of the traffic. I hold that the license system is a system of legalized robbery, and for all the immorality, poverty and crime of which the traffic here in Dartmouth has been the cause, every man who has not given the full weight of his influence against it is responsible. *Think* of it, a law on the one hand prohibiting vagrancy and crime, a law which fines the vagrant, imprisons and executes the criminal; and on the other hand a law to protect the rumseller in his infernal business of making vagrants and criminals.

I say it is a system of legalized robbery, and I can make good the statement. How much money has each one of our eight rumsellers taken during the year? I do not know. But there are a few things I will say, without fear of contradiction. I will venture the statement that each rumseller in the town takes more cash in a year than any honest merchant we have. I know that if a rumseller takes one thousand or five thousand dollars in a year his customers are just that much poorer, as he has given them absolutely no value in return. I know that all our honest merchants lose money every year because their customers give to the rumseller the money with which they should

have paid their grocer and tailor. I know that in hundreds of cases families have suffered hunger and cold for want of that money which went to make the rumseller's surroundings magnificent and luxuriant. And have we given men a legal right to carry on a business which robs hundreds of women and helpless children of their bread? Then I hold to it that we have legalized robbery.

I am met here with the *worse* than *weak* argument by which the traffic seeks to justify itself. It is that the rumdrinker is a free agent, and if he goes into a saloon and pays five cents for a glass of rum, drinks it, and falls down before he gets outside of the door and breaks his neck, the rumseller is not in the least responsible, he only complied with the wish of one who was a free agent, and solely responsible for his act. If he murders the first man he meets—the rumseller is not at all responsible, he only complied with the wish of one who was a free agent.

Suppose the free agent instead of asking for a glass of rum, had asked for a glass of poison, would the rum seller give it to him? *No*. Why not? because he would be hanged. Why hanged? He only complied with the request of a free agent who was solely responsible for his act. Why is not even law consistent? If it were what would become of rumsellers?

A man goes into a rum-saloon, asks for a glass of poison, the rumseller gives it to him, the man dies. The poison-seller is hanged at once. But he goes in and asks for a glass of rum, gets it, pays his five cents, goes home