

her, and a voice said: "Well, what on earth—for such a day!"—and Mary looked up into her husband's hot, red face.

"Why, John," she cried, "is it possible that I've figured out these bills all the afternoon?"

He looked disgustedly over the table, littered up with scraps of papers, bills, columns of figures and east-off letters. "It certainly looks like it," he replied, "and for a day as hot as this one, if I were a woman, I think I should find less to do."

Mary smiled knowingly. "But you've worked hard today, haven't you—down in the old foundry at that."

"That's different—a man's got to support his family—but speaking of weather, the thermometer's crept up until the heat's registered highest this summer, and when I came home I noticed an ugly looking cloud over in the Northwest—guess we're due for a storm."

He had hardly finished speaking when another flash came, followed by a rumbling, and the rumbling had hardly subsided when the two children bounded into the room and fled to the arms of their father.

"Oh, papa," they said simultaneously, "it's a awful dark outside and those clouds got funny tails on 'em, and we're scared—it's lightning, and the thunder makes such a noise."

"There, there, now; that will do," he said, patting their heads, "it's the first time we've had a thunder storm? Run along now, papa must clean up, and you get your blocks and play in the kitchen—nothing's going to hurt you."

Mary caught up the bills, together with Margaret's letter, and sat down on the davenport waiting for the re-appearance of her husband. Presently he came in and sat down beside her. "Well, Mary," he said playfully, "What's on your mind—it's plain to see that something's wrong."

"John, I'm just tired out trying to make our money cover those horrid bills, and it simply can't be done. We're always in debt, and I've managed and managed until I'm sick of hearing the word, 'manage.' We don't seem to get ahead—you drudge and slave all day in that foundry and we eat it all up in groceries, meat bills, drug bills, gas bills, light bills—yes, and rent—here's the last one I got from Hall this morning for another \$900—it seems just yesterday to me since I made out that last check for the rent. Then there's our clothes—the bills are terrible and we don't get anything either—the children are actually so shabby that I'm ashamed to send them to school—we've not had a decent suit in three years—and I'm wearing and making over the dresses I've had on hand for the last four years, and—"

"Hold on a minute and get your breath," interrupted John, "what's all this sudden solicitude anyway—it seems to me that things are about the same as they have always been—ever since we were married in fact—we're just living the fate of all working people—of course, things have been sky-high since the war." He stopped at this point to mop the perspiration from his face.

"Phev! I wish it would rain and clear up this atmosphere a little bit."

Mary was too interested in her subject to take notice even of the oppressive heat. "That's just it, John," she continued, "we're not saving a penny—we're living constantly beyond our means and we're not having anything either—all we have besides your wages is your life insurance—when we get old, we ought to have a home and the children need more for an education as they grow up."

Her husband looked at her quizzically. "Where's all this leading up to, Mary—what's the plan—you've a card up your sleeve?"

His wife laughed, almost gaily, for she knew that when her husband spoke in that manner, she could get him won over to her ideas—and today, she had a big one—bigger than he would dream of her concocting on a day too hot to even think. "Listen to this letter—it's from our old friend Margaret—you remember Margaret Russell, don't you—we used to go to St. Catherine's together. Well, they've done well out West—out in California—they own their own home and they've not been married any longer than we."

Mary opened up Margaret's letter and began to read:

"Dear Mary: It's been a long time since I've written to you, but there's been so much to do. You see we bought a fruit ranch—about twenty acres, and it's kept us hustling to get our crop marketed. We have just sold our strawberries for as large a sum as Harry used to get for working a whole year in the factory back in your town. In the fall, we market our apples, prunes and Bartlett pears. After those sales are collected, we will have our little home entirely clear. I have the cutest bungalow, with electric lights, telephone, and everything you have in the city—our place is only two miles out, so we get to church, to the theater and to the schools very easily. Our next venture is an auto. We wouldn't think of living in the city and working on a salary again—with all the high rent to pay."

"We're wondering if you can't just pick up and come out here by Christmas. There's a place adjoining ours that's for sale—there's fifteen acres, and the man wants to

go back East. You can get this place for a small down payment and pay up for the rest at your own convenience. We're so sure that you'll come that Harry is going to take out an option on the place and hold it until you get here. Now don't forget—between now and Christmas you can fix up your affairs—come out here and get a home of your own. Good-bye and good luck.

Lovingly yours, MARGARET RUSSELL

Mary laid down the letter. Now, John, let's go—let's get ready as soon as we can—it's the opportunity of our lives to get out of a rut, and—"

Her husband broke in, "But where's that down payment coming from, not to speak of all our debts here, and the cost of that trip West and the shipping of our furniture—it'll take \$1,500 at least."

Mary nodded her head. "Yes, I know—I've thought of all that. Your insurance policy is nearly paid up, so you can easily borrow a thousand on it, and then there's that eight hundred dollars I had before we were married—that's still in the bank and we could use that."

John jumped up. "Hooray, little woman, your plan is a good one—we'll go West, but you won't take that money out of the bank—I can easily raise fifteen hundred dollars on that policy alone—we'll clear out by the end of this month and old Hall can whistle as far as we are concerned for that old \$900 rent every thirty days, and—"

He got no farther for the children rushed in from the kitchen with blanched faces. "Oh, papa, look out—it's so dark and the clouds are funny."

Then came a blinding flash followed by a terrific crash, which in turn was succeeded by a deathly calm. Suddenly an ominous roaring and the pounding of hail brought them to the kitchen window. There they beheld a funnel-shaped cloud lifting and lowering, taking everything in its path. Instinctively they grasped their children just as they felt themselves lifted in the air and carried by the cyclone. There was no time for anything save an interior prayer. Then they came down and landed in a crash some hundred yards from their original home-site.

Mary and the youngest, a baby of three, were pinned under a projecting rafter and John was astride his neighbor's cook-stove. The older boy had been pitched into a basket of clothes. Luckily for all there was no serious damage, and John ran over and liberated Mary and the baby. "Thank God, we're all here," she said, with trembling lips—"no matter if the house is ruined—we're all together." They looked about them and surveyed ruin and desolation everywhere. The storm had passed as quickly as it came, leaving destruction in its wake, while to the East they could hear the ominous rumbling growing fainter and fainter in the distance.

Houses blown down and debris wherever they looked. Rescue parties were just organizing to seek the missing and the wounded though for the most part, there was a dazed aimless rambling on the part of those who had been spared even as miraculously as they were. A few minutes before, this had been a city of homes, now it was a city of the desolate and dying. In the distance the big chimney of the foundry had toppled over and the building was a mass of flames.

Her husband pressed Mary to his heart and there were tears in his eyes. "Yes, thank God, we are all here, and now we'll start to California before the week is over." He looked at the splintered house and his shattered pieces of furniture and remarked grimly: "I don't fancy we'll be bothered about shipping that furniture."

Just then Mary felt something rubbing against her and she looked down. "Why if it isn't Susan Jane," she exclaimed, grabbing up the family cat, minus a good bit of fur. "You poor kitty—you've been through the cyclone with the rest of us. We haven't any furniture, John, but Susan Jane's got to go with us—ain't you, pussy," patting her.

Susan Jane purred her assent, then suddenly spied the clothes basket. She jumped down, hopped into it and rolled herself up for a snooze as contentedly as if there had been no cyclone.

In the events which followed, it did not take more than a week for the Martins to close up affairs and start for their Western home—even Susan Jane had her own particular basket and behaved as well as could be expected under such trying circumstances, and long before Christmas, John and Mary were established in their new home adjoining the Kent's, and when that day came they went to Midnight Mass at a nearby monastery in Harry Kent's flivver.

After the bounteous repast held at Kent's as an old-time reunion, Margaret leaned over to Mary. "Aren't you glad you came out—really that cyclone was for your good—maybe you wouldn't have gotten the courage to pick up and come way out here."

Mary smiled and then frowned. "But, Margaret, think of all our nice wedding furniture—there was nothing left to bring along, but Susan Jane—oh, those darling chairs and the parlor suite—I'll never get over it, and—"

Margaret shook her head. "No, Mary, it's just a blessing in disguise—"

you'd have paid a fortune to have shipped it all out here,—"then she whispered—"now, you can make John buy you some new furniture." Then Margaret grew serious and her eyes filled with tears. "We, too, have had our losses—you know we lost our eldest, but God sent other children—what was it, the Sisters used to tell us about God's Providence and misfortunes being blessings in disguise?"

It was evening when the Martins left the Kents on Christmas, but as they passed the monastery, they stopped for Benediction, and as the strains of the Adeste Fideles rose heavenward, they raised their hearts full of thanks, to the Divine Child, Who guides all destinies.

NEW YEAR WISHES IN VERSE

The poets' New Year wishes are worth remembering, not only for their rhyme, but for the sentiments they convey: kindly, reverent, hopeful. It must be a recompense to poets that they can say so well the things we who are not poets feel so much, but express so blunderingly.

An anonymous "Wish for Your New Year" leaves but one regret—that it is anonymous. So reverent and generous a well-wisher should be remembered by name. Here is his wish:

May its light Be the sunlight of God's love; Its night, His sheltering wings above; Its storms, Reveal the wonders of His grace; Its calms, Reflect the beauty of His face; Its winds, Breathe whispers of His care; Its showers, Bring blessings rich and rare; May its cares Bind closer to His heart; Its joys, Be of heavenly joys a part!

Another poet voices doubts and questionings that come with each new year:

Some years lie rose-crowned in their joy; Some rue-entwined with shame; Some cypress-bound in sadness, Some laurel-wreathed with fame. How shall it stand, loved Saviour, The year begun today? Shall blooms of trust or thorns of doubt, Strew the untrodden way?

What will it matter, Father, Throughout the eternity, If happiness or sadness But draw our hearts to Thee!

In similar strain yet another poet reviews the past and looks forward to the future:

With feet the threshold of the New Year pressing, I turn to look upon the path o'er-trod. So filled with sadness, sweetness, fear and blessing; I joy to trace in all the hand of God.

His hand I see in friendships' precious keeping, In trials brave, in tearful eyes made bright, In life prolonged, in smiles of heavenly greeting, In sins outlived, in conquests thro' His might.

What shall this year, before mine eyes now holden, Bring unto me as swift its moments fly? What shall I bear from all its treasures golden Unto that life unseen beyond the sky?

The claims of friendship are expressed in this quaint verse entitled "A Friend's Greeting."

I'd like to be the sort of friend that you have been to me. I'd like to be the help that you've been always glad to be. I'd like to mean as much to you each minute of the day. As you have meant, old friend of mine, to me along the way.

I'd like to do the big things and the splendid things for you, To brush the gray from out your skies and leave them only blue; I'd like to say the kindly things that I so oft have heard, And feel that I could rouse your soul the way that mine you've stirred.

I'd like to give you back the joy that you have given me, Yet that we're wishing you a need I hope will never be; I'd like to make you feel as rich as I, who travel on Undaunted in the darkest hours with you to lean upon.

I'm wishing at this New Year time that I could but repay A portion of the gladness that you've strewn along my way. And could I have one wish this year, this only would it be: I'd like to be the sort of friend that you have been to me.

The following little wish says in four lines all that lips and heart can say in prayer for the welfare of another.

The bells ring out the passing year, The bells ring in the new; My wish is what it ever is— My God's blessings be on you!

MOTHER LOVE

Hon. James A. Reed, United States senator from Illinois, paid an eloquent tribute to mother love in a speech on the maternity bill before the senate in Washington. He showed that no other person can replace a mother in the home, that nothing else can be an adequate substitute for a mother's instinct and a mother's care. His tribute to mother love deserves wide circulation. It should be printed in our school readers to teach the children what they owe to a mother's fostering care. Many persons do not realize that there is no love like a mother's love, or they do not realize it until the day one is forever gone and gratitude is too late.

Senator Reed shows that the maternity bill has two primary purposes: one socialistic and the other mercenary. It is intended to supply work for a host of unemployed spinsters by authorizing them to poke their official nose into the sanctity of the home. Such a practice smacks of communism.

Mr. Reed lends lustre to the senatorial toga. He is usually on the right side of every public question, and, what is more, he has the courage of his convictions. He is tireless, fearless and incorruptible in championing every worthy cause. Long may his tongue hold its eloquence! Senator Reed said in part:

"Official meddling cannot take the place of mother love. Mother love! The golden cord that stretches from the throne of God uniting all animate creation to the divinity. Its holy light glows as bright in hovels where poverty breaks meagre crust as in palaces where wealth holds Lucullian feasts. It is the one great universal passion, the sinless passion of sacrifice. Incomparable in its sublimity, interference with it is sacrilege, regulation is mockery.

"The wild beasts hear its voice and answer to its call. A tigress, finding her cubs slaughtered, pauses to lick their wounds, and then with raging hearts seeks out their murderers. A wolf, standing at the mouth of her den, with gleaming fangs and blood-red tongue, dies in defense of her whelps. Tiger's cub or wolf's whelp, I would rather feel the rough caress of the hairy paw of my savage mother. I would rather have her care and protection than that of an official animal trainer. I once saw a little timorous mother quail, with marvelous intelligence and still more marvelous courage, protect her brood by exposing herself to the hood of a deadly aim. It then realized that nothing can take the place of mother love.

"If its divine fire so warms and thrills the heart of beast and bird, with what intensity does it consume the bosom, with what ecstasy inspire the soul of a woman for the child of her body. Although she knows that she must risk her own to bring forth a new life, she does not draw back. Her love-lit eyes behold only visions of happiness, of glory and of power to be realized by her unborn child. With smiling lips and eager heart she enters the vale of shadows. The first cry of the new-born falls on her ear sweet as the music of paradise. Her trembling hands caress the tender skin, her soul cries out the anxious question: 'Will my baby live?' The torturing days of convalescence fly swiftly upon wings of hope. She nestles the tiny, helpless thing to her bosom; sustains it with the milk of her body, every drop drawn from a fountain of infinite love.

With indescribable solicitude she watches over her offspring. Even when her body slumbers her soul keeps vigil, and her hands in unison with her spirit will stretch forth to soothe the baby back to sleep. With glowing pride she watches the growing child, shields it from harm, guides it along the paths of rectitude, inspires its soul with lofty sentiments of honor and of faith in the eternal God.

When time has piled the snows upon her head and turned her brown or raven locks to white, her love will still abide riper and sweeter with the passing years. Though she may live until her children are themselves grown old and gray, she yet will see the silken locks of youth, their roughened hands have yet the caressing touch of baby fingers; their voices bear to her the tender and melodious notes of infancy. And when at last she approaches the portals of death, there is no solace so sweet as the presence of those she bore "to people and replenish the earth."

For mother love there is no substitute, even though it bear an official stamp. If there be truth in religion, then this holy sentiment was planted in woman's heart by the hand of God. It has made life possible. It is in truth the very source of life itself. When all other passions are dead, it survives. It will pass through the fiery furnace of disgrace and yet live. It will endure the scorching breath of conformity with unwavering fidelity. A mother will enter prisons of shame and kiss a felon hand thrust through the bars. She will sit beside the accused in the courts of law, when the mob jeers and the heartless machinery of justice grinds its grist of agony, and with unwavering faith maintain her child is innocent. She will stand at the foot of the scaffold and, when the trap has fallen, cover the condemned body with kisses and with flowers. It is still to her the innocent suckling she once hugged to her breast.

"But if the path of life has led her son to fields of honor, her heart will glow with pride ineffable. If he is called to war, she will bid him good-bye with dry eyes although her heart be filled with tears. She will maintain a firm and hopeful mien, that he may gain sublimar courage from her sublime example. When he sleeps upon the tented field her spirit will keep watch. Whilst he is slumbering she will pray. In the agony of waiting she will die a thousand deaths, but she will choke her sobs and hide her torture. She will search for him amongst the slain, and try with kisses to warm the dead and unresponsive lips to life. She will coffin her heart with the beloved body, and her soul will keep the eternal vigil of a deathless love.

"Mother love! It has produced, fondled, reared, inspired and glorified all of the shadowy hosts who have passed across the bank of time since man first raised his eyes towards the heavens. It is, I say again, the golden cord that binds the earth to God. Official interference between the mother and her babe is tyrannical and criminal."

—Catholic Union and Times.

PROHIBITION, LIBERTY AND THE MASS

What does the Eighteenth Amendment forbid? According to the text of the Amendment, "the manufacture, sale or transportation of intoxicating liquors within, the importation thereof into, or the exportation thereof from, the United States and all territory subject to the jurisdiction thereof, for beverage purposes, is hereby prohibited."

The Amendment is specific. It is inclusive. It states definitely what is prohibited. It also states definitely what is not prohibited. But the fanatics whom Congress in shameful indifference to its solemn oath has permitted to usurp the legislative functions of the Federal Government, insist upon prohibiting what the Amendment does not prohibit and was never intended to prohibit. Out of the Amendment they have torn three important words, "for beverage purposes."

Assuming a high moral tone, they set at naught the supreme law of the land.

By this desertion of the Constitution they have begun a campaign which, unless the American people forthwith assert themselves, can easily end in the destruction of civil and religious liberty. If the plain intent of one Amendment can be disregarded, the intent of any Amendment, or of any clause in the Constitution, can be disregarded. Under this procedure, the Constitution is less than a scrap of paper. It is a mockery and a lie, the cloak of knavery and the shield of hypocrisy.

By what right does Congress define as "intoxicating" a liquor that is not intoxicating? Yet Congress has enacted that absurd definition. By what right does Congress impose any restriction, even the slightest, upon the manufacture or sale of a liquor that is not intended "for beverage purposes?" The answer is plain. Congress has no powers whatever, except the powers conferred by the people in the Constitution. But the Constitution has given Congress no power "to define a non-intoxicating liquor as intoxicating. It has confined to Congress no power to interfere with the manufacture or sale of a liquor which is not intended "for beverage purposes."

But Congress has usurped these powers. Upon the medical profession it has imposed tyrannical restrictions, by destroying the physician's freedom to prescribe an intoxicating liquor not as a beverage but for the alleviation of pain. It has imposed restrictions upon the use of alcohol, not intended for beverage purposes, but for essential processes in science and the arts. Worst of all, it has dared, directly and through minor officials, to impose conditions upon the manufacture and sale of wine, not for "beverage purposes," but for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. No such power in any of the cases alleged is conferred by the Eighteenth Amendment. It has no more vital connection with wine for the Mass, with intoxicating liquors prescribed by a physician, or with alcohol manufactured for scientific and commercial uses, than it has with economic conditions in Patagonia. Whatever regulations have been issued in restriction are a simple usurpation, to be borne with for the avoidance of greater evils, yet an open usurpation of powers not granted by the Constitution.

What Congress may yet do, under the lash of the Anti-Saloon League and allied fanatics, remains to be seen. The danger of this amendment, not only to the Mass but to civil liberty, was stressed again and again by this review, and the warning was met by those who should have known better, by the ridiculous accusation that America had been purchased by the "liquor interests." Fanatics, bought and paid for, cannot understand that all men are like themselves. This reflection, however, while pertinent, is but incidental. The fact of real importance is that Congress has openly violated the Constitution and that further violations, that of the Fourth Amendment, for instance, are now pressed by the fanatics.—America.

This Jesus Christ, in whom we are created, of whom we are members, this Lord of our spirits, this Light of our understandings; this He in whom alone we can find true God. This is He whom men have been seeking in heaven and earth, and in the waters under the earth. This is He in whom alone they can find that eternal life for which they are thirsting, and which they are trying to find in the visible earth, or in some fantastic heaven, or in some depths which none have been able to sound.—Selected.

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