

PROHIBITION

Its Relation to

TEMPERANCE, GOOD
MORALS *and* SOUND
GOVERNMENT



SELECTIONS

From the

Writings of Men who have
given Thought and Study to this
question from the standpoint
of both Theory and Practice



Compiled by

JOSEPH DEBAR
CINCINNATI, O.

Liberty vs. Prohibition

BY CLARENCE DARROW.

The following address was delivered by Mr. Clarence S. Darrow, of Chicago, at a public meeting held in New Bedford, Mass., on December 4, 1909. This city, with Worcester and others, changed from "dry" to "wet" by a large majority in the election held a fortnight later.

I am going to talk to you on the subject of prohibition. Of course I know that the good people who are voting no-license tell you this isn't a prohibition campaign; that is, they don't propose to forbid anybody from buying liquor, they only propose to forbid anyone from selling it. You have a right to buy all you want, but nobody can sell it. Now that is prohibition logic. (Laughter.) Perhaps a drunken man might understand it, but I don't know who else would. It ought to be pretty plain to the average man who doesn't try to fool himself that if it is against the law to sell something, then nobody can buy it without either violating the law or getting somebody else to violate the law, which isn't any better, and not quite so good. So if the citizens who propose to forbid a license in these towns succeed, and the law is enforced, it means that nobody can sell and nobody can buy it. If it means anything else, it is a farce and a fraud and a humbug, pure and simple, and there is no use to fool about the question and try to deceive anybody, even yourself.

So this question, as far at least, as a policy of government, is a question of prohibition, pure and simple,—at least simple, I don't know how pure it is. (Laughter and applause.) You are going to be called on to vote this town dry again. You can probably vote the town dry, but can you vote the people dry? Somehow the Lord, when He fashioned this Universe and created man, didn't understand the job as well as the prohibitionists understand it, and He left mankind to stumble along and do the best they can. If the Lord had been given the advice of the prohibitionists it would have been much easier and saved us a lot of trouble. There wouldn't have been any wickedness in the world, excepting prohibition. (Laughter.) If anything went wrong, all that would be needed would be to make another law and then you could make people right. If men drank too much, make a law and then they won't drink too much. If they ate too much, make a law and then they won't eat too much. If they don't go to church, make a law and then you will fill the churches. If they don't go to the right church, make another law and head them in the direction of the right church. If a boy wants to have any fun on Sunday, or a man who works hard all the week wants to go to a picnic on Sunday, make a law; then he won't go to the picnic, but will go to church. Now the Lord didn't understand His business when He conceived His plan of peopling the earth with men and women; there were no prohibitionists there to give Him any advice, so He simply created man and left him here with all the infirmities of human nature which often lead him wrong; with all the higher feelings which sometimes lead him right.

He doubtless understood that, after all, there is nothing that counts with man, excepting character, and if he hasn't got the character to take care of himself, then he isn't worth taking care of. That was His theory. But

it isn't the theory of the prohibitionist. If a man hasn't got the character to take care of himself, then we have got to take care of him and ruin ourselves doing it.

Now I concede the honesty of these people. They are honest, they are high-minded, they have been willing to preach their doctrine in season and out, and are working for the good of the world. They ought to be heard, they ought to be listened to. Every man that has a theory, no matter how fanatical, ought to be allowed to air it and present it. All I object to is being put in jail if I don't agree with the other fellow's theory. I don't believe in prohibition, but I am not a fanatic. If I had a chance to make the law just as I wanted to, I wouldn't compel a prohibitionist to drink a pint of beer every morning for breakfast. (Laughter and applause.) I think that would be carrying it too far, and I wouldn't pass a law to make him pour down his throat a glass of whisky against his will. That would be carrying my doctrine too far. No more will I permit him to say to me, you can't drink a glass of beer if you happen to want it. To my mind, it is exactly the same thing, and I wouldn't stand for either one, but the prohibitionist says: "Oh, no, you can't make *me* drink beer and I won't let *you*."

Well now, if he cuts me off from everything he doesn't believe in, I don't know what I will have left. It is a wise and fine scheme. The people, for instance, on the front row of seats will pick out the things they like to eat and drink, and they will say to the people on the second row: "These are the things you have to eat and drink." And the people on the second row will fix up a bill of fare for the people on the third; now it is possible the people on the first row know better than the people on the second what is good for them; but it is also possible that men would get along better in the world if they decided for themselves what is good for them. They may

sometimes decide wrong; they may eat something or drink something that doesn't agree with their stomachs, but, after all, human tastes are not the same. And as a general rule it is a pretty good plan to mind your own business. (Cheers and applause.) That is, if you've got any. (Laughter.) Now if I were fixing up a bill of fare for people to eat, I wouldn't let anybody eat chicken; I don't like it, I can't understand how a sensible man can eat it. I would rather have corned beef, but I have known a good many fairly intelligent people who eat chicken, and if I should pass a law to cut them out of chicken, why the clergymen might say I was aiming at them, and why should I? (Laughter.)

We have inherited some traditions of liberty in this country. They are not new to Americans. They are not new even to English-speaking people, but we have believed that each person should be left as free as he possibly could be, consistent with fairly good order in the society in which he must live. He should be left to do what he pleases, drink what he pleases, smoke what he pleases, live as he pleases, go and come as he wants to,—in short, manage his own life. Unless he can do this, he may as well be dead, for if somebody else is going to manage it for you, you won't get much fun out of living. (Laughter.)

ETHICS OF THE QUESTION.

Now there are two or three things in the beginning that I want to speak about. I am not interested in whether you are going to sell more goods in New Bedford with whisky or without it. I don't care a cent for that kind of argument. I don't live here and I don't think if I did I would be influenced by any such consideration. If drinking beer is in the category of cutting throats and burglarizing houses, then you ought to be ashamed to make

money out of it, and you ought to go prohibition even if the grass grows in the streets. I don't care whether you get rich or get poor because of drink, and I don't think any self-respecting man ought to care whether you get rich or you get poor because of it. If it is a business which fairly and justly comes within the criminal code, then you can't excuse yourself by getting money out of it, neither the city nor the nation. The nation ought not to get revenue and the city ought not to get revenue, and the business man ought not to get revenue, if drinking beer is like cutting throats and burglarizing houses. On the other hand, if it is not, if it is a part of my liberty which I should defend—and when people stop defending their liberty, it is gone—then it doesn't make any difference whether we lose money out of it or whether we don't lost money out of it; I ought to stand for the simple right to manage my own affairs, to eat and drink what I please without calling a town meeting to decide on the bill of fare. (Applause.)

I don't propose to-night to give this audience any statistics. I could give you statistics by the bushel, and so could the other fellow. You can get statistics on both sides of any question, no matter what that question is, and generally they don't prove what they pretend, and it takes a very wise and educated man to handle statistics, and likewise a very honest, unprejudiced and unbiased man to handle them and make anything out of them excepting some broad generalizations. Now I haven't got any time for them myself. I would rather discuss principles. I would rather talk about things that every person in this house knows and understands, which can't be juggled or fooled with, and which appeal to your human nature and your innate instincts, as to right and wrong.

Is prohibition right? Is it right in theory, or is it wrong. Let's see. Now you know it is a great deal easier to make a prohibition speech than it is to make one against

prohibition. I never tried to, but I have listened to them and the prohibition speakers can beat us to death. They don't know the reason, but I will tell them if there are any of them here. I wouldn't want to hold a debate with a prohibitionist for the simple reason that he could get the audience in spite of himself. I never look for trouble that way. The prohibitionist appeals to the feelings and the sentiments and the passions of men. You know it, Did you ever hear any of them talk sense? (Laughter.) They appeal to men's passions and feelings and prejudices. And when you do that you have got your audience, and when you talk to a man's judgment and reasoning, that is a hard job, I don't care whether it is in New England or in Chicago.

There are some things that have been said on both sides which I regard as somewhat foolish, and I want to go away leaving you the impression that I meant to deal honestly with this subject, as I intend. I may be mistaken about my judgment, many times I have been, and you are the ones to decide it. I don't have to live here, I can get a drink in Chicago any time. (Laughter.) Then, besides, I don't care much for it. I never cared anything for it until this prohibition movement set in. (Laughter.)

I don't believe that alcohol is a food; I don't believe that men need beer or whisky or alcohol in any form, and I don't propose to argue it. I am willing to concede that beer and wine and whisky are just good for one thing. That is, that they taste good going down. That is all there is of it, excepting, of course, for mechanical and sacramental purposes, and I don't know much about their use there, so I won't discuss that. You have a right to use them for that even in a dry town, but aside from that they taste good going down; that is, they taste good to some people. There are some people who say they don't taste good not only to them, but to anybody else—of course,

they know! They are wise, and they know what a well-developed, normal appetite is, but I wouldn't trust them. Sometimes people are color-blind in their tastes.

I don't believe for a moment that the human system needs alcohol in any form. But what of it? Is that any reason for not having it? We have a great many things we don't need, as I will show you a little further on. The fact is that none of us are interested in the things we need. Anybody can get the things they need; you can get them at the poor-house and not work at all. It is the things we don't need that everybody is after. It is the theatres and the good food and the good drink and the automobiles and the vacations, the things we don't need, that we are all working for, which make life worth living. "You fellows can have the necessities, I will take the luxuries!" That is the way it has always been between the working man and the fellow that don't work,—that is the reason I don't work. If anybody is satisfied with the things he needs, that is about what he will get, and he won't need much at that.

Now this question does not require very much discussion. I think I can state our side of the question in about ten or fifteen sentences. If I am born free, or become free by act of law, and if I am of age and able to look after my own business and haven't any guardian and can buy a horse or sell a farm, then I ought to be able to order my dinner at the hotel and say what I want to eat and what I want to drink.

It is one of the most primitive wants and one of the most primitive desires and if I can't settle for myself what I want to eat and drink and wear, where I want to live and how I want to live, then I haven't got very much liberty, after all, and freedom is very much of a dream. If I am free by the laws of my country, I ought to know whether I want to drink beer or coffee. Probably both are some-

what injurious—coffee much more so than beer. But it is my own body I am taking a chance on all the while and nobody's else. It isn't for me to prove my right to do it. The fact that I live and breathe in a country consecrated to individual liberty is enough. I have the right to do it because I am a man, and a man who lives under a government where people are supposed to be rulers of themselves, instead of their fellow-men. And that is all there is to it. If a man tells me, "You can't drink beer," then it is up to that man to give the clearest and most explicit reason why my liberty should be curtailed. It isn't for me to prove my right to drink beer any more than my right to breathe air or drink water. I prove them both by the same logic and by the same common instincts which move all men.

CRIME AND DRINK.

What excuse has the prohibitionist to offer that the drinking of beer or any intoxicating liquor is a crime, and that men should be forbidden it or sent to jail if they have it? They have the same excuses to-day that they had forty years ago; they tell you that beer and whisky and wine are responsible for most of the crimes of the world, or a large part of the crime of the world. They say that intoxicating liquor produces crime; produces poverty; produces death; produces misery, and for that reason it should be forbidden by law. That was the indictment then, and that is the indictment to-day.

Is liquor responsible for any large part of the crime of the world? Is it responsible for the men in jail? Has the man in the penitentiary or the man whom society has singled off as criminal, been made so by rum? Now when I speak of criminals, of crime, I don't mean a plain case of drunk, where a man gets too much liquor and is locked up for the night, simply because he got too much liquor—

that is not a crime in any sense. If men were arrested when they eat too much, the same as they are when they drink too much, about half the best citizens in town would spend every night in jail. (Applause.)

But when I speak of criminal conduct, I speak of crime, such as has been denounced by the law and by people always as criminal. Is whisky responsible for it? Now I will give you a few facts which appeal to your own experience and which show how false and untrue this statement is. It is hard to gather statistics of crime or statistics of any sort and prove that they are true, but I can give you some facts. First of all, the men who fill our jails and our penitentiaries come from one class and only one,—that is the poor. Our jails, whether in Massachusetts or in the West or in Europe, are filled with one class, and they are built for one class, and that is the poor. Here and there and once in a while some rich man is caught, but only enough to show the exception which proves the rule, for when a rich man is sent to jail, he isn't sent there for drink, but because he wasn't rich enough. The jails and the penitentiaries all over the world are built for the poor. Now let me ask you one question which settles all of this. Did you ever know any rich people to drink? It can't be. Because if they did they would be in jail or the penitentiary, for drink produces all the crime in the world. Why to hear these wise philosophers stir up the passions and feelings of men, you would think only the poor drank. Now, as a plain matter of fact, beer or whisky is like almost everything else in the world,—all of it is produced by the poor and the best of it is consumed by the rich. They have plenty of time and plenty of money to drink with, and there are a lot of poor people who are too poor to drink.

A great philosopher and historian, Thomas Buckle, who wrote the first part of "The History of Civilization in Eng-

land," made long observations extending over long periods of time in all countries and he showed conclusively that the number of people in jail rose and fell every year just as the price of food rose and fell. (Cheers.) When bread was dear, it meant that more people went to jail; when bread was cheap, fewer people went to jail. He also showed what every man who has honestly studied this question has found out since—not what prohibitionist orators have found out, they never find out anything—that more men go to jail in winter than in summer. Ever hear any prohibitionist say that? They don't know it, and if they knew it they wouldn't know what it meant, and if they knew what it meant, they wouldn't tell you. There are more people in the jail in the winter than in the summer because work is scarce.

I will tell you something else—more people go to jail in hard times than in good times. The poor man goes to jail in winter; when the sun comes out in the spring and work becomes plentiful, he comes out of jail because he can live outside easier than he can inside. He is governed by natural law, nothing more or less. You may take a hundred cattle and place them in a field and if the feed is good they will stay there, but let the feed get short, and they will mighty soon learn to jump the fence if they have any brains at all. So it is with people. Under this system of society, where a few men own the coal and the iron and the timber and the land and the railroads and have monopolized all the means of production and distribution, the great mass of men, having nothing to sell but their labor, are living close to the line of want. They are living where sickness, misfortune, accident, loss of a job, drive them to want. Some of them are less intelligent than others, but there is always a very narrow line that separates the lawful from the unlawful, and often misfortune or loss of work causes these poor unfortunates to

step over the line between lawful conduct and unlawful conduct, and they fill our penitentiaries and jails. Then, too, there are people who commit crimes,—crimes of feeling and passion, of hatred and revenge and jealousy, which have ever moved the hearts of men.

Let me give you a few illustrations that may appeal to your experience. Tell me that crime is produced by Rum! We have had three Presidents of the United States assassinated: not one of the three assassinations had as much relation to liquor as the change of the moon, not one! You have read of the murder cases all over New England, New York, and the United States. You can scarcely recall one that had any sort of relation to liquor, no more than to food. They were due to the passions and feelings and hatreds of men and of women; and had no relation whatever to whisky, and still orators keep repeating over and over again that old story, that whisky is responsible for the crime of the world.

How do these people find it out? Why I know something about criminals, so-called; I know something about them because I have seen them and I know them and I know something about myself, and all of us are partly criminal and partly good. Where do you suppose they get their information? They don't need any information, to start with. They just say things, and they have got it, where? Do they get their statistics out of the jails? Now STATISTICS ARE DANGEROUS. They are still more dangerous when they come out of a jail, and doubly dangerous when they come out of the jail through prohibition speakers, and you can't depend upon them at all. How do they get them? A poor man is locked up in jail; nobody comes to see him, he looks over across the court-yard and sees a friendly visitor coming toward him, and he can tell who he is a block away. He knows he is a prohibitionist because he has a face as long as a telegraph pole. The

friendly visitor says to him, "My good man, how did you get in here?" And he says: "Rum!" Right off quick. If he said beefsteak the friendly visitor would put it down as "Rum" anyway, and tell him he was criminal and a liar, too. (Laughter.)

But suppose he answered it right, then what? I have gathered statistics in jail. I have had something to do with the law. I have been at it a long while, and have tried a good many criminal cases. But I never defended a guilty man in all my life. (Laughter.) Now you don't believe it. Well, I will tell you how I know. I asked them and they said they weren't; they said they were innocent. Why, you go in there and see one of them and he is charged with stealing a twenty-dollar gold piece; he would say: "I was going down town for a loaf of bread and some fellow came out of an alley and he shoved a twenty-dollar gold piece in my pocket and the policeman came along and took me, and the other fellow 'done' it and I didn't do it." And if there isn't anybody else in the world it can be charged to, there is always one, and that is Rum! Rum! And when you say Rum did it, why, every prohibitionist in the country will say, "Amen! How glad we are, it gives us more statistics."

We don't know much about crime. Ordinary men are educated to believe that a criminal is in some day different from other men. He isn't. It may be that his intentions are as good as ours. I could take any one in this house who never knew anything about crime whatever, to a penitentiary on a Sunday morning, lead him into the chapel and upon on the platform. Once on the platform, look at the sea of faces before you. If you never had had any experience, you would know that these people were criminals. You would know it from their misshapen heads, you would know it from their starved bodies. You can cure crime in one way, and only one. Abolish monopoly! Give men

an opportunity to live! Let no man beg for a job! Destroy poverty! Give men light and air and food, and the jails will vanish and be a nightmare of the past! (Prolonged applause.)

But to talk about the responsibility of Rum is the idle chattering of children. The one great cause of crime, the one great cause since the world began is poverty, and if you want to abolish crime, abolish poverty, and until you abolish poverty you can't abolish crime! But the prohibitionist says: "All right, poverty is responsible for crime, and whisky is responsible for poverty." And there you are right where you started.

Is he any nearer right in this? Let me ask again this question. Did you ever know of any rich man who drank. It can't be, because they would get poor. (Laughter.) There are a whole lot of men who manage to consume a great deal of champagne that other people have made, that haven't yet got poor. I have no doubt that champagne is responsible for some of the poor man's poverty. But it is not the champagne that he drinks, but the champagne the other fellow drinks. It is the champagne he makes for the rich.

WHAT CAUSES POVERTY?

Does drink cause poverty? Let's see. Why does it cause poverty, and how do these gentlemen prove it? They find a poor man that drinks, and if a man drinks and is poor, then drink makes him poor. If they find a rich man in an automobile that drinks, then the drink ought to make him rich because he drinks and is rich. If you see a man who is poor, and that man's breath smells of whisky. Oh! Oh! He is poor because he drinks! All he needs to do is to close his ears to the song of the agitator and get in behind the prohibition procession, and he will get rich!

Men may make mistakes in spending their money, probably often do, they make bigger mistakes when they don't spend it—but they make some mistakes in the way they spend it. I have known men to spend money for whisky when I think they ought to have spent it for something else. I have known men to buy Merry Widow hats for their wives when I think they should have bought something else for it. Suppose the women get together to close up all the saloons, to save your money, what is the matter with the men getting together to shut up all the millinery stores to save your money? And when a man buys a great big schooner of beer for a nickel and at the same time his wife has a hat covered with feathers and woodchucks and carrots (laughter) and things that cost \$20, you are poor because you bought the schooner of beer.

I have known people to be poor because they gave too much to the church. I have known people to be poor because they hired lawyers. You can get poor for any old cause; but let us look at this question—I don't want to omit anything.

A man who talks to the poor man about getting rich by not drinking beer is insulting the poor man's intelligence, and he never read or studied anything himself in his life or he would have seen it. Now the poor people we will say spend money liberally for beer. There are very few of them would spend one-tenth part of their wages for beer, but suppose they spend one-sixth or one-fifth. The food bill is a big bill and I will undertake to say, as poor as the poor man is, there isn't one of them that doesn't waste three-fourths of the money he spends for food. According to their theory, the poor man has one business, that is, to keep well and strong so he can work; that is all, that is what he is for. So far as health and strength and ability to work are concerned, you waste three-fourths of the money you spend for food. Why just

think of it! Take your stomach and load it up with pie and cake and liver and tea and coffee, and what is going to happen to you? You are shortening your life and you only eat because it tastes good going down. You don't need butter on your bread, your ancestors didn't have it, and your children won't have it either if you follow the prohibitionists in their theories. You waste money on your clothes, you don't need collars and neckties; they are purely ornamental. Women don't need fur and feathers and silks. They are ornamental. You could live in a cheaper house, you could save three-fourths of your money. Now let me tell you. Suppose you cut out meat and save a half of your food bill; do any of you think you would get that money? If you do, you had better guess again.

THE QUESTION OF WAGES.

How are wages fixed? A man may pin a little oil lantern on his cap and go down a thousand feet into the earth in a cage and work all day with the rocks falling in about him, breathing miner's asthma into his lungs until he dies an early death, and he may get \$1.50 a day and he may earn \$10 a day, for his sacrifice of life and health and the expenditure of his strength. His wages are not fixed by what he earns. They are fixed by several great laws which govern your condition and mine. Another man may sit at his desk, he may be a lawyer; he may go to his office at ten o'clock in the morning and work two or three hours and go home and get a hundred dollars for his day's work. His wages are not fixed. Or a man may preach a sermon once a week, a short one,—possibly the shorter the better—(laughter) and he may get ten times as much as a miner. There is no way of fixing what he earns; he gets what he can. Or a man may be a stockbroker and he may make a turn in watered stock or sell something that

he doesn't own, and he may make \$500,000 in a day. Just because he can! There is no law that fixes it, there is no relation between what a man earns and what he gets, no necessary relation. Wages are governed by several laws, one being the supply and demand of labor. When stock-brokers get as plentiful as miners, they can't get any more wages. When preachers and lawyers get as plentiful as miners, they can't get any more wages. I wouldn't trade jobs with you people for the same money. Of course, I know we fellows who live by our wits are very fond of telling what a hard job we have, but it is a lie. It is easier to live by your wit than by your muscle—you don't get so tired. Wages are fixed by the law of supply and demand, and fixed by another law. There is a law governing wages which says that wages tend to come down to the lowest price that will keep men alive and permit them to propagate their kind. They have to be kept alive in order to do the rich man's work, and they have to raise a family so that the rich people in the next generation can have their work done. And wages can't go beyond that point, the point that will keep men alive and permit them to propagate their race. When you say keep them alive, it means keep them alive under the conditions in life in which they live. And every effort of the working man should be,—every effort of the working men of Europe and America, to give their energy and strength and mind towards improving their conditions in life. Is there any doubt about it? Why if that isn't true, then nothing is true that your unions have taught you, nothing is true that your friends have said, nothing is true that the great political economists and philosophers who really loved the poor have ever said. Men are obliged to use every means in their power to keep up their standard of living because it is difficult to reduce wages below the standard of living. In Italy men can live on macaroni and a little wine and

do their work, and that is their standard of living, and wages hover around it, although they have wine which is cheap and plentiful, and about the only thing that tastes good to an Italian laborer that he ever sees or feels. In Russia they can live on some cheap soup; all over Europe the poor man gets along without meat. He can't afford it; he may eat tripe and entrails and stuff that the rich men throw away, but he can't eat anything the rich man wants, he has to take whatever is left, as laborers have to take what is left, and there is mighty little left.

The working men came here where there was opportunity, and here they have established a standard of living which is higher than the European or the Asiatic and they have learned to have fairly good clothes. They have learned to go to the theatres. They have learned to have meat; to have something to drink, to have some of the luxuries of living which the rich have always claimed for themselves. Now they say, you better give up some of them and save your money. If you give them up, you give them up forever, and you get nothing whatever in their place.

You know about the history of trade unionism; it has been a hard fight to improve the condition of men. This world has been taken by the strong. Way back your ancestors began your fight. The early trade unionists met in the woods, and among the rocks and waste places; they hid their records in the sand and caves; they were sent to jail if two of them came together and agreed with each other to get higher wages. They would like to do the same thing again and are doing the same thing again in free America. Step by step the unions have fought this fight. Step by step they have fought for the right to be men. They have fought for the food the rich have, they have fought for the clothing and shelter for themselves and their families, which the rich have always

taken and denied to the poor. They have died in prisons and on scaffolds, they have died in every way that the poor man might have more of the luxuries of life. The improved conditions you have to-day are not due to the prohibitionists, but are due to the silent dead, who have given their efforts and liberties and lives in your behalf.

And now you are asked to turn your backs on what they have done. You are asked to leave to your children a poorer life and a poorer heredity than your fathers have given you. You are asked to turn back to the past. If you give up your luxuries, any of them, you will be going back, backward toward the place from whence you came, and as you go you will pass the whitened bones of those heroes who have died in your behalf and who have fought for the liberties which you have given up. Do you want to do it? If so, do it. But do it with your eyes wide open. Fight for prohibition if you will but do it with your conscience; do it with your judgment; do it with your reason. The only thing for the working man to do is to keep what he has and to get more.

LABOR'S DEBT TO PROHIBITION?

Gentlemen, I admit I am somewhat impatient at this crusade. I am impatient about its hypocrisy. I am impatient on account of its selfishness; I am impatient on account of its ignorance; I am impatient on account of its prejudice. Who are these people who come to you and ask you to give up anything that has been wrung from the labor and suffering of the past? Are they your friends? Have they fought your battles when you have made your brave struggle for a chance to live? Have the prohibitionists stood at your head and fought your fights? Who are they that shutting their eyes to all the experiences of the past, never knowing your feelings, or

knowing your cause, or having sympathy for your troubles, would presume to place themselves at your head and tell you what to do. I object to a great body of men, the trade unionists of America who represent the hopes and the fears and the sufferings and the aspirations of their fellow-men, who have done more than any other class of men in America to make life better for the poor and weak, to give more comfort and happiness to mankind—I object to this great body of men being led down a blind alley by a handful of fanatics who know nothing about their cause.

I was reading a book the other day by a celebrated Russian physician, Metchnikoff, who is now the head of the Pasteur Institute in Paris. He says men ought to live to be 120 years old, if they lived right, and it is true; and he puts down food as the first cause for their not living longer. Rum was one—overwork was one; lots of them die because they work too much—not prohibitionists, working people. Food he put down first. Now it is perfectly plain if a man dies under 100 years of age and doesn't get run over by the car, or struck by lightning, he has died in his infancy.

Let me give you a few facts that I believe are so plain that even a prohibitionist could see them if he opened his eyes, which he won't. These people don't care anything at all about life. They think they do. They doubtless are honest in it, but they are so carried away with their own eloquence that they fool themselves. Do they care whether men live to be 25 or 125? Not a cent. I will prove it to you. Do you know that the life of a working man is not more than 60 per cent. as long as the life of the rich? Now, why? Is it rum or champagne? No; it is work. The whole body of men who toil are born into this world and know nothing excepting to work from morning till night. No other trade but to earn their living by their hands. They die when only a little over half their life is

lived. And we fellows who live on to be seventy or eighty, as the case may be—you know a doctor lives ten years longer than the working man; a lawyer has a better graft still and lives five or six years longer than a doctor—but the preacher beats all of them. (Laughter.) Every working man in the world has his life cut off by work. I am speaking broadly now. Of course there are exceptions to all rules, but broadly they live out from one-half to two-thirds of their lives because they work, and somebody says although you are going to live one-half your days, you must stop drinking rum for fear you will have a good time.

When did you ever hear of a prohibition convention raising its voice in protest against killing working men when their lives were only one-half done? They are too busy talking about Rum. Now let me tell you more. Do you know of all the people who are born into this world, all who come upon the earth, one-fifth or one-sixth of the human race of the whole world go out through one door, and that door isn't Rum—that door is tuberculosis. One out of every five or six, they are lessening it a little; they are lessening it not on account of the prohibitionists, but on account of the scientists—one out of every five or six die from tuberculosis and they die between twenty and thirty as a general rule, when they are of the most use to their families and their friends. They die from lack of air and food and room and opportunity to live. They die, not on account of rum, but on account of monopoly, and if one-tenth part of the energy and money and hot air that is spent on rum were spent on tuberculosis, that great scourge would have been wiped away years ago. Do these gentlemen care anything about tuberculosis patients? No. A man may be eaten alive by tuberculosis and the prohibitionist looks square in his face and says, "Oh! Rum! Rum!" Why, in our tenement districts tuberculosis goes from father to son, from mother to daughter, from sister

to brother, and in our sweat-shops and factories they die like flies, because men have monopolized the earth, and the prohibitionist looks on and shouts, "Rum!" Let me tell you more. A half-million working men were killed and maimed last year, the victims of our industrial machines. They were ground up by cars, they died in molten vats of steel and lead; they had their arms and hands cut off by machines; they fell from the tenth or fifteenth story of an iron structure, up in the air, while working to buy bread for their families. They died by every spindle and engine that makes these great industries what they are. Half a million of these lives and limbs could have been saved if man cared for life and didn't care for dollars. If they tried to make machines safe, safe to protect human life, men and women and little children, these lives would have been saved. The other day, in the State of Illinois about three hundred poor fellows went down into the earth with a torch on their head and lived a lingering death of perhaps a week or ten days, and never came up to their families and their homes. The reason was that men were more interested in making a mine profitable than in making a mine safe. (Applause.) Do you hear any of these prohibitionists sigh and do you see them shed tears and do you hear them raise their voices in agony because of a half-million poor working men ground under the wheels of industry every year to make money for men? No. They don't see the tears of the widows and they don't hear the moans of the orphans, and they don't hear the dying groans of the poor victims of our industry. They are too busy shouting, "Rum!"

I can tell you more. Do you know that in our tenement districts, in our great cities, where men and women and little children are huddled together like ants, do you know that half of the children of the poor die before they are six years old? The rich man's child will live, the poor

man's child will die. Half of them before they are six years old in our crowded tenement districts! They don't die because they drink too much rum, but because they drink too little milk! (Applause.) You must remember the rich people's work must be done. The poor die for lack of food, for lack of air and nobody cares. The prohibitionists are too busy about rum.

Do you know that the labor organizations of this country have kept their men before every legislative body in America?—they have taken their earnings and sent men to the capitals of every State and the capital of the Nation to plead for legislation that would make safety appliances for railroads and cars; that would make mines safe; that would protect life. They have been there year after year, pleading to take little children out of the mines; to take them away from the spindles and put them into the schools; to prevent women from taking the jobs from their husbands and fathers. Have you ever been to a legislative body and found a committee of prohibitionists there to help you plead your cause? Have they ever raised their voices in behalf of your lives, of your limbs, of your wives, of your children? Have they ever done anything except to shout, "Rum"? While you have been there pleading for your homes and your families and your lives, over here in the corner is raised a hoarse cry of the prohibitionists, saying: "For God's sake, don't take that! Don't give us the Employers' Liability Act! Don't give us the Safety Appliance Act! Don't do anything about mills and mines; just wait. Don't take up that. Let's first destroy rum. Join with us on a moral issue. Let us get rid of rum and then we will help you," and if you help them get rid of rum and go back you will find these gentlemen in the corner and they will say: "Not now. Let us get rid of tobacco. Let us get rid of theatres and cards and billiards

and dancing and everything else, and then we will attend to you."

THE ONLY WAY.

Now there is one rule of life. If you give men opportunity, give them food and clothing and drink and sunlight and homes, they can look after their own morals and they can't do it any other way." (Applause.) The whole theory of prohibition is wrong. If they get one thing they will want another. To-day it is rum. To-morrow it will be tobacco; next day it will be coffee. The theory is wrong; man can only progress by liberty. Is there any doubt? Look back to the origin of the human race, back to the time when man rose from the brute creation and looked the world in the face. Every step has been a struggle; he has been ruled by kings, by tyrants, by the great, by the strong. But he has slowly fought his way upward to the position he occupies to-day. Every step has been a struggle, every footprint has been marked by blood. It has been a long and painful battle that the human race has fought. Every step has been inspired by the spirit of liberty. And take the dream and ideal of freedom from the human race and slowly and painfully it will go back to the brute creation from whence it came.