

Economic Aspects of the Liquor Problem. 4

The economic side of the liquor problem is by far the least important when compared with the moral & physical sides, yet it is that particular phase of the question one hears argued most on the streets. It is the side that most concerns the voter because the pocket-book is thought of first & foremost. Many, many think anti-saloonism will effect that pocket-book in a bad way.

Now, that idea among people is due, it seems to me, to either of two things. Either the voter has not made it his business to investigate the conditions where the "drys" have tried the problem out, & it certainly is his business as a good citizen, or else opinion has been moulded by some one else. Study the question, decide it for yourself, & let your conscience, which is a guide that never goes amiss, direct your course. Count all the cost - not only the pocket-book side, but all sides. Take your stand on election day with open eyes & hold it without remorse.

The towns & cities where temperance has been thoroughly tried out have demonstrated that the solution of the saloon problem is no saloon. They have proven without a doubt that the saloon is not a business but a parasite on business. Just a few weeks ago, a grocer brings in an Indiana town of 4,000 people where

In a speech before the H. of Rep. in 1911, he said. The confirmed drunkard has his productive eff. lowered 75% - The temperate regular drinker suffers a loss in prod. eff. of 50% - so that the loss due to lowered efficiency conservatively estimated is fully \$8,500,000,000. It is also proven by figures that 700,000 men are cut off ultimately every yr. by alcohol. They would have sober an economic value of \$8,000 making a loss of \$5,600,000,000.

The economic losses from the lowered eff. of our producers, from the debt lost, from the cost of crime, pauperism, insanity - produced by alcohol, the liquor bill which paid for 2 1/2 billion gall. of alcob. beverage - the total economic burden laid upon the nation was bet. 16 + 17 billions of dollars which was equivalent to taking from our people all the wealth of all our farms, all our forests, all our mines & all our fisheries. Think of it friends. Don't that ^{astounding?}

There were in Calif. in 1909 - 16,236 saloons. The tax payers paid out the year before to care for pauperism & prosecute crime \$9,679,024

The 16,236 saloons rec'd from the pockets of the people in this state \$131,253,200, a per capita of \$65 for every man, woman & child in the state.

Don't you think it true our population is estimated at 5,500 I believe so that would mean that S. L. D. at 7000 gave to the saloons last year \$357,500. Don't you think it ^{is} ^{more} ^{time} to care that

(2)

the saloons were driven out by a remonstrance, said:
"When the contest was on, I took no active part. I was fearful if we put out the saloons, we'd injure business & of course, I wasn't in for taking a chance of jeopardizing my own. The remonstrance was successful. The saloons were closed. During the last 4 months the law has been strictly enforced in the town against liquor selling & I am glad to say I was mistaken in the effect the closing of the saloons would have upon my business. In fact my grocery trade increased more than 50%. I have had no increase in the no. of customers. My increase of sales is merely an increase in the amt. of purchases by my former customers. I can now get the money the saloon keepers formerly received. I have learned that my real impediments in the grocery business were the saloon keepers & not the rival grocers.

I have heard some of the talk going round. Many are afraid if the 20 odd saloons here are closed that it will mean just so many buildings left empty, taxes raised to make up for the revenue gotten from the saloon - a dead loss as far as business is concerned & that the wet towns were at hand will gain what we lose. Read the story of Fargo in North Dakota & of Marehead in Minn. just across the Red River.

(3)
When N. Dakota adopted constitutional prohibition the prediction was freely made that the liquor in the state would decline & that Minn. liquor just across the Red River which divides the two states, would profit by N. D.'s loss. I'll not burden you with figures ^{& tell of the comparative} ~~but~~ ^{prohibitory} ~~infirmary~~ ^{infirmary} that the city - debt in Fargo after 10 yrs. of no saloons was \$19.50 per capita while in Wreckhead Minn., just across the river, it was \$44.79 per capita.

If you want to read of something highly interesting, you read the story of Kansas City, Kansas & Kansas City, Missouri. ^{where the 250 saloons in the latter place closed.} They are not even divided by so much as a river. Mr. John S. Danson City, General of Kansas writes an interesting acct & tells how the 250 buildings were not left empty - How the business in K.C. Mo. did not decrease, but increased instead of during it - over into K.C. Mo., as everybody predicted. ^{and a map to head of parking house} Why the publicity of the closing of the saloons there brought letters from all over the world making inquiries. There was a marked contrast in the information requested. From foreign countries the questions were, "How did it affect the morals of the people? What effect did it have on crime?" The inquiry from the various states was always the same. "How does it affect business?"

Let us come a little nearer home for some information. I'm going to read from the "Anti Saloon League Year Book for 1912."

One of the great cries here is, "Taxes will be higher." (4)
I should think you would cry if there were really
any fear of them going higher. Do you know
the taxes you're paying now on \$100? \$2.12.
Seems to me folks are crying a little late.

I have here a part of the Biennial Report of
State Comptroller, Wm. A. B. Hye - giving the tax
rate on 12 wet towns & 12 dry towns. Let me
read them off:

The average for the wet is \$1.56. The average
for the "dry" \$1.09, showing that the tax rate is on
the average \$49 higher in the wet towns than in the dry.

No greater battle ever raged than that in progress
between the friends & foes of a higher standard of civic
righteousness in our municipalities. As I told you
before - before you became a friend or a foe but sure
beforehand which you want to be. Everybody knows it's
not an easy thing to grow - to progress. It's easier not to.
To some it will be pleasant to adjust themselves to the
old conditions & let the new grow on their backs. Such
people will be foes. But those who mean to stand for
good - as foes on the side of good govt. - will be friends
of the temperance cause.

If I were to ask the people of this town if they were true
patriots, I think every one without a single exception would
say yes - & perhaps many would be insulted for being asked such a
question. Let me just say this - True patriotism is not a matter
of waving flags & 7 months of July orations. It lies not in denouncing
Mexico nor in fighting Chili. It consists first in knowing what
is true about one's own community & then in the willingness to sink
one's personal interests in the welfare of the whole. Are you true patriots?
I believe you are.

Remember I am able to say after Dec. 11 - "With open eyes I did it,
& I cherish no regret."