

Saloonkeepers Simply Won't Admit July 1



Where longshoremen gather at South Street, facing the East River

By John T. Wallace

THEY have different theories of how it's all going to happen, but never a one of them is without some theory. Occasionally the customer brings up the subject; more often it is broached by the man in the white apron. But the latter, be he proprietor or bartender, has invariably an abiding and beautiful faith in some immutable working of Providence that is to stave off the dry spell which is scheduled to descend upon this land of the free July 1. They manifest a simple trust that is positively touching.

A pessimistic soul will wander into Steve's place. Steve himself may be on duty and will mix expertly the Martini his patron orders.

"Well," sighs the pessimist, "there won't be many more of these."

Steve bristles.

"Forget it," he declaims. "They ain't gonna close us. No chance."

"But the law says you gotta quit sellin' it," the pessimist remonstrates.

"How they gonna enforce it?" demands the oracle of the mahogany.

"Fuh?"

"Yeh!" chortle the coterie of regulars at the end of the bar, "that's the dope. How they gonna? Tell Steve how they gonna enforce it."

Steve beams in triumph and rewards the faithful "yes men" by setting up the drinks for the house, including the pessimist. But that heretical individual is not to be so lightly disabused of his dire forebodings.

"Oh," he ventures, "this guy Anderson'll find a way to enforce it. Leave it to these anti-saloon birds. Enforcin' prohibition is just their dish."

Disdain, utter and absolute, flashes from Steve's thick-browed eye.

"We got that bunch on the run," he announces.

He makes the statement knowingly, in his manner indicating that in common with others of his ancient guild, and their lawyers, campaign



Interior of the old bar opposite Pier 5, East River

managers and press agents, he is informed of the details of deep-laid plans and schemings which, once arrived at their fruition, will throw the dries into a rout which will make that German affair of last October resemble a Sunday school picnic.

"Why, *Belihu Root*!"—Steve resumes, then stops. He tosses his head backward and winks slowly and profoundly. "Well, just you wait and see what happens."

There is no mistaking the inference. The regulars at the end of the bar nod sagely to one another and inwardly speculate upon what Steve and Senator Root and other leaders and advisers of the wets have up their sleeves to spring at the last moment upon the childlike and unsuspecting dries.

The pessimist subsides. After a while he moves on to Jake's. Jake, be it known, is a staunch believer in the ultimate thwarting of the prohibitionists by the force of public opinion. There really isn't any question that that portion of the public with which Jake comes in contact is strongly opposed to prohibition.

"The people won't stand for it," he states stentoriously.

As for himself, Jake doesn't give

a tinker's tin whistle whether the country goes dry or not.

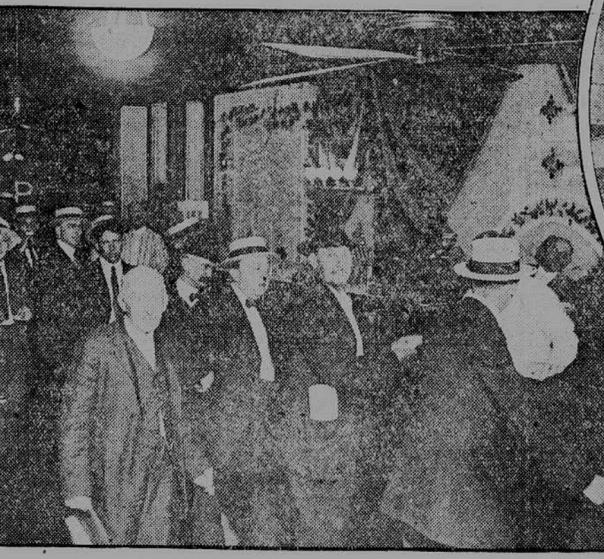
"S'far's I'm concerned," he assures the customer, "it don't make no difference. It's you fellers I'm thinkin' of. What'll you do if it goes dry? Tell me 'at, will yuh?"

It is deeply affecting to many drinkers of long and impeccable standing at the bar, so to speak, to contemplate the downright passion with which the once haughty aristocracy of retail liquor dealers is unfolding the formerly despised commonality of buyers and consumers of drinks to its palpitating bosom. Many a man who has striven for years, without any marked degree of success, to achieve a plane of—not equality, that would be overweening ambition—but a plane, let us say, of easy familiarity with the corner saloonkeeper suddenly finds himself the object of that potentate's greatest affection and concern.

Accordingly, the pessimist is not surprised at Jake's solicitous query: "What'll you do if it goes dry?"

This is somewhat of a poser, to be sure. What will he do? he ponders.

"Why," he finally ventures, "I suppose I'll have to do without the stuff."



Hess's bar, at the corner of William and Frankfort Streets

—Photos by D. G. Phillips.



Charles Furthman's place, at the southwest corner of Times Square

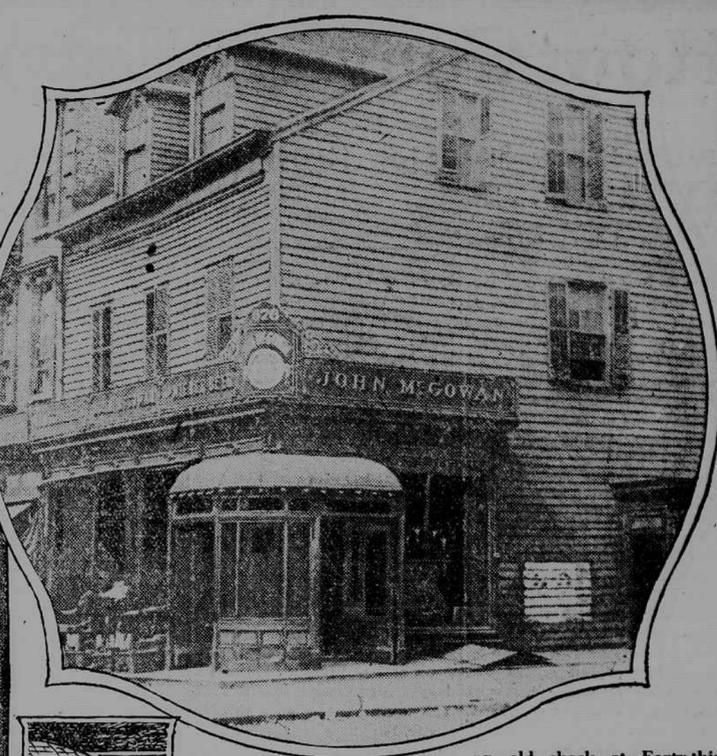
"Har, har, har!" Jake guffaws. His risibilities are immensely tickled. "You do without the stuff!"

The pessimist has absurdly questioned a solemn dogma of the trade. It has long been a favorite argument of dry advocates that many saloonkeepers do not themselves indulge in the wares they sell and that many others insist that their bartenders

be teetotalers. Just what degree of truth there may be in that assertion the writer has never undertaken to calculate. He has known saloonkeepers and bartenders who were often willing to join him in a drink and others who would merely "take a cigar." There is a legend that those who come under the latter classification keep a trick cigar on

the top of the bar box of smokes and always take the same one, thus materially increasing the profit on the original investment. That, however, is probably a slander.

Be that as it may, and be a saloonkeeper or bartender either a moderate or an immoderate drinker, a lifelong abstainer or a reformed booze fighter, any suggestion to him



an old shack at Forty-third Street and Third Avenue

that the customer who has been in the habit of dropping in several times a day for his little stimulant can suddenly and irrevocably break off that habit, verges on the ridiculous.

Which brings us to Dave, to whose oasis the pessimist repairs after his innocent expression of good intentions has been received so raucously at Jake's.

Dave is chiefly concerned over the moral welfare of his fellowmen once their supply of liquor is cut off. He is convinced that a general realization of the dreadful iniquities to which he believes the American public would resort were prohibition to go into effect will serve to stay the onward march of the dries before July 1.

"Take away your booze and you'll go to the coke, won't yuh?" Dave demands.

The pessimist indignantly denies that he will do any such thing.

"Well, you know what I mean," Dave mollifies, "mebbe you wouldn't, but a lot of 'em would. Yuh can't deny that now, can yuh?"

It occurs to the pessimist to reply that, not being endowed with second sight or the gift of prophecy and never having had any particular occasion to study the ways and customs of the devotees of cocaine and kindred narcotics, he is in no position either to deny or affirm Dave's prediction. But he concludes that would probably go over Dave's head, so he contents himself with merely admitting that he can't deny it.

"Course yuh can't," Dave rejoins. "Have one on me."

And over the drink Dave explains how the great American saloon has become the last bulwark of the forces of decency and morality against the encroachments of those who would foist the drug habit on hundreds of thousands of hitherto respectable citizens, whose one failing was an occasional highball or cocktail. His eloquence is so persuasive that the pessimist comes almost to envision himself two years hence as the pitiable slave to a hypodermic needle. He actually gets sorry for himself and

pictures the misery to which his wife and children will be reduced. Consequently he takes more than his usual quota of Martinis and reaches Pete's, last stop on the way homeward, rather the worse for wear.

Pete's long suit is personal liberty. Like Patrick Henry, he is ready to die for liberty, if need be, and he has lately memorized several stirring passages from the Declaration of Independence in the back of his small son's school history. Every once in a while he startles his patrons by reciting to them at somewhat greater length than accuracy from the venerable document.

"Personal liberty is the backbone of the nation," Pete tells the pessimist, "and prohibition knocks personal liberty on the head. It's unconstitutional and the courts'll stop it. They ain't no doubt about that."

"What we gotta do," he goes on to the now semi-conscious pessimist, "is to fight it in the courts. Now, if you'll sign one o' these membership cards in the Association Opposed"

"Jush shign m' name, thash all?" inquires the pessimist, fumbling for his pen.

"And pay one dollar for a year's dues"—Pete interjects.

The prospective member looks at the \$1.05 which remains of his bankroll. His mind is still clear enough to figure it will buy three cocktails on the morrow.

"No, I guesh I won't shign," he responds. "Shtoo late now. Law's pashed. Sh'd've done all that before."

"That's the way with you fellers," Pete retorts, in high umbrage. "You leave all the burden o' fightin' this thing on us liquor dealers and we're doin' it for you."

But the pessimist has stumbled on He has an alibi all prepared, as the door of his domicile opens to receive him.

"Shorry, m'dear," he apologizes to Mrs. Pessimist. "Wush detained."

"So I observe," comments his spouse, icily. "Thank heaven the first of July will soon be here."

The 77th Has a New York Clubhouse of Its Very Own

THE key to our front door is at the bottom of the Hudson River tied to a can of bully beef," says Tom Tallon, the red-headed Irishman who manages the clubhouse of the 77th Division Association. He means that the door of the place is wide open and always will be, and that any man who fought or trained with the 77th Division is welcome to come in.

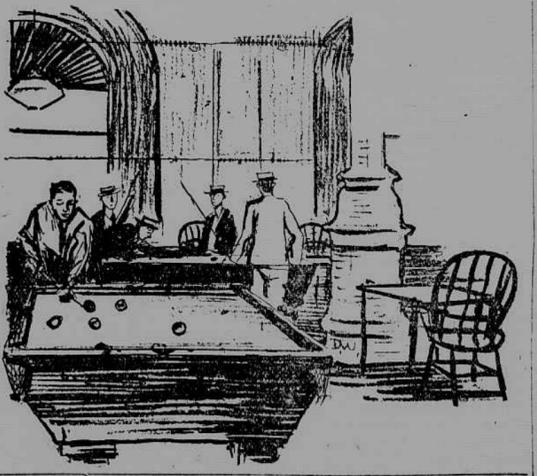
Any one who takes advantage of Tom's invitation will find at his disposal a clubhouse which, potentially, rivals any on Fifth Avenue. Just now the walls need a little paint and the floor a little polish, but already there is a lounge with sofas and armchairs so soft that it takes the average doughboy a week to climb out of them. The clubhouse is the old Astor Library on Lafayette Street, between Fourth

Street and Astor Place, which has 300 feet of imposing brownstone frontage. The proportions of the place are such that when the equipment is complete it will look like the Bar Association or the Union League Club.

The ground floor of the old building provides office room for the 77th Division Employment Agency, where Gordon L. Sawyer, of the United States Employment Service, with a staff of clerks who were soldiers in the division, is finding jobs for the men who fought overseas. On the ground floor also is the billiard room, in use at all hours of the day and some of the night. Five tables are now working, and as soon as more boys get the habit of coming to the club more will be installed.

Nothing Small

Up a central stairway of the grand horseshoe type—there is nothing small about this place—is the prize floor of the building. Here are the old reading rooms of the library, partially remodelled to fit their new use. In one of them are the offices of the regimental auxiliaries, the associations of the womenfolk of the soldiers, which sent sweaters and encouragement to the fighters who ploughed through the Argonne and also helped to maintain the families of those who needed aid. On the same floor is the club



kitchen, provided by the Red Cross. "We have everything here," says Tom Tallon, "but the beefsteak and the boys to eat it, and we expect to have them soon." Adjoining is the dining room, donated by Rodman Wanamaker.

Next to the offices of the auxiliaries is the room intended to be converted into a gymnasium. Its floor is large enough for a basketball court, with several handball courts tucked away in a corner. All around the room is a gallery that seems to have been built especially for a running track, about fourteen laps to the mile. Just now it is divided into alcoves by the elaborately carved bookshelves that formed part of the old library equipment, but of

these a couple of carpenters could make short work.

Adjoining the gymnasium is a battery of shower baths, already installed. In the coming hot days these baths will probably be the most popular features of the clubhouse. Many a former member of the division who works in an East Side sweatshop will welcome the relief he can get here when his day is over. Later, when the number of men who use the clubhouse has increased, a swimming pool will be built.

No Trophies

In the entire building there is no other evidence of the less pleasant days of military service. There are no battle scarred flags and no trophies. A uniform is rarely seen inside the door. All suggestions of the military are carefully avoided. Tallon was a sergeant, but he doesn't speak of that now. Still less do the officers who come to the clubhouse.

The clubhouse is more than a mere place of amusement, however. Behind it is the idea of the 77th Division Association, conceived by the officers of the division in France as a means of perpetuating the lessons learned in the war by New York's drafted men.

tion, which provides if any one of its officers attempt to run for political office he is thereby automatically removed from his position in the association.

Just now the association and its clubhouse are waiting for the boys to show their interest. Those in charge have just launched a campaign for three thousand men to declare that they will take an active interest in the clubhouse. In the past few days several hundred have

done so, and the three thousand, it is confidently said, will surely come.

Meanwhile the social life of the club continues. On June 25 the 305th Field Artillery will give a smoker. On the following night the 306th Infantry will entertain. Major General Alexander is expected to attend at least one of these functions. And in addition to the formal gatherings, there is a daily accumulation of ex-soldiers around the pool tables, which are never idle.

