

THE BREWERS' REFORM AND THE NEWSPAPERS . . .

The reform professions of the brewers in their convention at Milwaukee have attracted wide attention in the newspaper offices of the country, and are, of course, viewed in varying lights as the attitudes of the editors differ upon the subject. The Philadelphia North American is one of the foremost of those that regard the action of the brewers as both dishonest and ineffectual. It says:

Excellent in all respects, so far as mere words go, is the proclamation of the brewers. Had such a platform been put forth and honestly adhered to before the abuses and crimes of brewery-backed saloon men had piled so high that finally they toppled over upon the heads of those really responsible, the present national protest against the traffic would not have come into being.

But they speak too late. They have sinned away their day of grace. Their repentance comes after the clock has struck twelve.

And even now they do not speak honestly, for they declare that it is a mistake to believe that the commercial interests of the brewers stand back of the excessive multiplication of saloons or any of the unlawful or improper practices of the saloonkeeper."

The chattel-mortgage and license records of every city in the land give the lie to the first statement. And the power in their hands is never used to check all evils by cutting off the supplies from saloons that tolerate gambling, the social evil, sales to minors and drunkards and during illegal hours.

For the moment we believe that they would be willing to do a little temporary housecleaning, if by that means they could check the overwhelming wave of the people's indignation. But their past proves that this means only that:

The devil was sick, the devil a saint would be.

The devil got well, the devil a saint was he.

The Union, of Springfield, Mass., a paper that has been uniformly favorable to the liquor interests in the tone of its editorial comment, devotes much space to the action of the convention under the heading, "To Improve the Saloon," but the tone of its conclusion indicates its real beliefs in the matter. It says:

Now perhaps the brewers will be more particular about the sort of places to which they extend financial encouragement. It is even possible that they may effect improvements under license that will put the results of Prohibition in an unfavorable light [!!!!]. But it must be recognized that the campaign that the brewers seem to have undertaken for the betterment of things was not inaugurated until the work of the anti-saloon forces had put the interests of the brewers in jeopardy.

The New York Evening Mail says that the brewers have merely recognized the obvious in seeing that the saloon business must be reformed for the protection of the liquor traffic, and comments in the following tone upon the character of the saloon:

As it stands, the saloon offers a target so broad that no stone flung at it misses the mark. There is a feud, an inevitable feud, between the substantial sentiment of every community and the grogshop that furnishes a squad of floaters to the crooked politician, ministers skillfully to the vices of social "treating," leads the weak man along the downward path to vagabondage, offers hospitality to

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cadets, makes itself the rendezvous of thieves, opens its back room to harlots and under the name of a "hotel" provides upstairs the reality of a disorderly house.

The Mail appends to this some nonsense about the beautiful situation in Germany, but ends up with calling the American saloon "an open sewer."

The Atlanta Georgian quotes the views of the Milwaukee Sentinel as follows:

ful economic question—the brewer is seeking to expunge from his affairs the things that have brought down the wrath of the country. But can even this belated reformation stay the onward march of Prohibition? Few believe that it can or will.

The East Oregonian, of Pendleton, Oregon, quotes from President Liebmann's address the assertion that "the brewers' association stands for temperance in its best and highest sense," and says:



THE VICTORY OF DEMOCRACY —From the Nashville Tennessean

The cartoon above, though published some days before the primary election that carried Tennessee for the liquor interests under the banner of "local option," gains new significance by that triumph of the Democratic machine.

Every sensible brewer knows that the disorderly saloon is a menace to the brewing interest. Every respectable brewer winces to see his family name paraded on a sign at such doors. Mr. Brisbane rubbed salt on a raw spot when he touched that point the other day. But the brewers applauded him just the same. Heretofore the brewers have in the main left the regulation of the retail trade to the public authorities, where it primarily belongs. Their business was to brew beer, not to regulate conduct. Now—roused by the demands of a grave situation—they propose to take a hand in the regulation themselves.

Upon this the Georgian observes:

This is perhaps in some measure a strained effort to absolve the brewer from responsibility for the dive, but fact upholds the history of the business in the past that the big, rich, powerful brewing interests fathered most of that class. It is now a fight with them for life, and realizing the overwhelming public sentiment—no longer a pure sentiment, but a power-

This very association of which this fellow Liebmann is president is responsible for the rapid spread of Prohibition today. It has sheltered, encouraged and backed with capital and liquor stocks, every disreputable joint in the country, simply through the inordinate greed to sell beer. This association has started more joints and maintained more dives and kept more low-down saloon men in business than all other interests combined. Because the joints sold beer for members of the association the association protected the joints and the worse the joint and the more beer it sold, the better it has suited this great "moral" association. Who ever heard of a buzzard cleansing its nest?

The East Oregonian's editorial is properly entitled, "Temperance, Bah!"

The Intelligencer, of Wheeling, W. Va., basing its opinion upon the advance matter sent out by the brewers' association, concludes that the principal business of the convention was to reform the liquor business and comments upon

the need of reform, as follows: It is not a difficult thing for capable and level headed business men, like the men engaged in the brewing business, to pick out the grosser evils of the saloon, and find an effective cure for them. The question is at they willing to make the financial sacrifice that is necessary. There no good reason why a saloon should also a gambling joint, yet a good proportion of the saloons in Wheeling, and in a great many other all over the country, are simply adjuncts of gambling establishments. There is no essential connection, between a saloon and a policy shop; in the city of Wheeling and probably in many other cities, every policy shop is located in, or has some connection with a saloon. There is no good reason why the sale of liquor should be an adjunct of the business of prostitution; yet there are in the city of Wheeling, and probably in thousands of other cities, that themselves to this most shameful traffic.

The News and Observer, of Raleigh, N. C., in an editorial entitled "It Came Too Late," says:

The saloons and breweries never even talked about "reforming" their business until they saw the handwriting on the wall. They encouraged and made money by dives and shady places run in connection with whisky shops. Saloons, dives, brothels—that is the trinity that stood together everywhere until people were aroused. They stand together now. The "higher-up" fellow now talks big in public about the driving out of the "dives," but if the people should go to sleep, these same wet crowds would be as silent against their necessary partners as they have been until the temperance sentiment caused them to make a death-bed repentance.

The Chattanooga Star notes a great change of attitude in the brewers' convention and is reminded of days when the brewery interests professed absolute indifference toward the Prohibition movement. It says:

The anti-Prohibitionists are alarmed. They are driven into the last ditch, but they are not fighting with the desperation of despair evinced by him who is willing to die in a righteous cause. Knowing their business to be bad they have weakened and lost heart, and hope now by concessions to gain a little longer lease of life. They may get it, but not for long.

The Topeka Capital concludes from the report of the brewers' convention that "the only true temperance organization is the United States Brewers' Association." It, however, points out how the breweries have been proved to stand behind the law-breaking saloons, and says:

Satan rebuking sin was a model of consistency compared with the brewing interests advising as to measures for the spread of temperance, "raising the standard of living," and

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