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 INDEPENDENT**

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### The Mirror Club

"GLORY to Alcohol, which fires our soul!" is the formal motto of an order just formed in Paris. Men calling themselves the Sons of Rabelais have organized to withstand any campaign for prohibition in France. They have adopted resolutions and sent forth literature declaring that wine is a precious part of the dearest glory of France. It is to famous vintages that they ascribe the unforgettable bravery of French soldiers in the war, and all the dazzling distinctions won by Frenchmen in art and science.

The world will be divided between mirth and anger at such claims for Wine the Mocker. But extremism always has a lesson, and in this case the lesson is plain. If Alcohol is to be defended at all, it should be defended like this: If wine, or beer, or whisky, or vodka, are not bad things, they must be good things, and very good things.

The human race knows all about alcohol. It has been in the world from prehistoric times. Every nation has known alcohol and intoxication and delirium tremens. The literature of every people is full of its records. And finally, after centuries upon centuries of experience, civilization is pronouncing it an evil, a destroyer, a poison. As in other things, the younger nations are leading the older in freeing mankind from the ancient curse.

This is the position taken by the American people. And there is no other position, except that taken by the Sons of Rabelais. There can be no middle ground on such an issue. It is either the greatest of poisons or the chief of foods. It is either a curse and a blight or a blessing and an inspiration. We should either build monuments to the pioneers of temperance or raise public treasure for the perpetuation of saloons. If this thing is good, as it is powerful, it must be a great power of good, and our motto should be, "Glory to Alcohol!"

The Sons of Rabelais should be re-named. They should be called the Mirror Club. They are a transparent glass on a dark background by which all who oppose prohibition, on any excuse, can see themselves.

### Preachers

LIEUT. BELVIN W. MAYNARD who won the great air race across the continent and back, leading all competitors from New York to San Francisco and back to New York, is a Baptist minister.

While part of the country is talking of Lieut. Maynard, other parts are talking of Elder Alvin York, who is making a tour in behalf of his fellow-Christians in the southern mountains. Elder York has been called the bravest man in the war. His single-handed capture of 132 Germans, and other hand-to-hand fights which he carried on in the thickest fields of action, have gained for him every order of military recognition.

These men should stand out as lessons to those among us who speak of preachers as if they were "preachers and not practitioners." There is for some reason a tendency to doubt the usefulness of preachers, and every now and then some member of the guild proves us wrong. Literary people are quite likely to scoff at preachers, though some of the most striking literary successes in any age are won by men like E. P. Roe, Thomas Dixon, Cyrus Townsend Brady, and Harold Bell Wright.

The preacher who is a mere talker is not a useful man, even in the pulpit. He will not be a successful man, even in the church. But the preacher who takes

his calling seriously, who really undertakes to study out the principles of life and living, who makes his own career consistent, will be a success himself and a safe guide to success for others. The man who preaches for the sake of talking is a nuisance indeed, but the true preacher who has something to preach is needed by all of us.

### The Happiest Exiles

THE Swiss Government recently ordered out a special train through the mountain republic. It was not to carry some eminent dignitary of their own or some other land. This train was to transport one thousand Poles and Czecho-Slovaks, returning from America to the new Bohemian and Polish republics.

The Swiss Government did well to show a festal spirit when these travelers passed through. For these men and women are the guests of humanity. Years ago they or their fathers went forth from Poland or Bohemia or Slovakia, went forth from subjugated and oppressed lands, to find a home in America. In their absence, but not without their aid, these subjugated and oppressed lands were brought back to independence. Now they welcome back their children on the freehold of the ancestral soil.

Switzerland herself has wrought out her independence. She knew in former centuries the iron burden of Austrian oppression, the mighty joy of liberation. Not even America can join more gladly in the gladness of Poles and Czecho-Slovaks than can the free mountaineers. So these people of the new republics, passing from the American republic through the Swiss republic, enjoy all the hospitality of free brethren.

Happiest of all exiles are these returning Slovaks. For while they went forth homesick and broken-hearted, they found full hospitality and freedom on this side of the sea. And we may expect that most of them will find their way back to us. They will tarry to rejoice with Warsaw and Prague, but they will carry with them abundant and alluring memories of Pittsburgh or Detroit, Massachusetts or Minnesota. Here they first practiced freedom, first realized citizenship. In their ancestral home and in their home of exile, they have realized that to freemen every free land is home.

### Building for Earthquakes

NIKOLAI LENINE is said by a French observer to be the head of an international revolutionary plot. A network of Leninism covers the world, says this student. All existing governments are marked for obliteration, and all existing industries are marked for loot. He warns all governments to take warning from the fate of Russia.

Some existing governments probably will not take warning from the fate of Russia. They will continue building up their high-towered royalty, until a slight shaking of the earth will topple over the fortified palaces. It seems vain to cry out to some governments to beware of the dangers that overthrew the autocracies of Russia and France.

But in general we feel that our American Government, and the British Government, and a few others, may rest more secure. In countries subject to earthquakes no skyscrapers are raised in the towns. The inhabitants are content to build lower structures of broad foundations, great slabs of stone or great flat bricks. They have not yet built buildings earthquake-proof, but they have raised structures which have shuddered and stood through many cataclysms.

So we have based our government broadly on the people. The people have not above them a great towering autocracy, bowing down the taxpayers to the earth and glittering with power. They have rather a broad-built government, resting on the people's will and support, and continually becoming more and more adapted to the common folk, and to their changing aspirations.

All revolutions must come from the people. The American people will not listen to Count Nikolai Lenine if he calls for revolution in America on the ground of wrongs in Russia. The Russian autocracy was never built for turbulence. But our institutions were built for popular support, and for changes by the public will. They were built to shake but not to break with the people's upheaval of expression. And they will stand, like the ancient flat-slabbed churches of Central America, though every royal tower from pole to pole shall crash to the ground.

Therefore we shall not tremble before the schemes of Lenine, nor even before the schemes of some greater man who may lead the Radicals of the world when this adventurer shall have passed away.

### Don Jose in a Raincoat

THE bull-ring in Mexico City was recently the stage for a performance of Bizet's opera, "Carmen," with Enrico Caruso singing the part of Don Jose. Caruso is a singer whom all the seasoned audiences of Europe delight to honor. The classic critics of the world might not think of him in connection with the Mexican bull-ring. Yet when the opera was given in that arena, fifteen thousand men and women assembled, and heard the first three acts with mighty delight.

A rain storm burst suddenly in the third act. The management announced that the fourth act could not be given. The fifteen thousand rose in their seats and demanded that the opera should not cease. They cried out for more of that music, for more tones from that voice, as madly as ever a crazed audience cried its applause to the triumphant bull-fighters.

And Signor Caruso was convinced of their sincerity. He yielded to such a stormy demonstration of appreciation. He protected his health by waterproof coats and heavy boots, and walked out before an audience which was largely protected by umbrellas. Then he sang that last act of "Carmen," and his associates sang with him. And the audience heard him through to the last note.

This is a good piece of news for us to read. We are too apt to think of Mexico in terms of bandits and outlaws and adventurers. We are seldom told by anyone that Mexico has poets and artists and musicians. And there is seldom any rally of the people to show that vast numbers of them love what other enlightened peoples love. The Caruso demonstration, in a ring built for bull-fights, in the capital city of Carranza, is in a sense a debut of the Mexican people in the artistic society of civilized nations.

### Beauty Beyond Art

JUSTICE ROBITZEK of the Bronx municipal court has made an utterance from the bench which deserves to be recorded on tablets of bronze. A suit was brought before him to recover damages for injury to a house. A baby had marked the walls with his little stained fingers. Justice Robitzek dismissed the suit.

"This would be a happier world," he declared, "if baby fingers could only make their imprints on the hearts of men and women. I would rather see the prints of baby fingers on the walls of my house than have them adorned by the world's masterpieces."

Once in a while some true-minded man turns us away from shallow admiration of what is pretty to a deeper appreciation of what is beautiful. We know that a neat house is pretty. But we also know, in our better moments, that a little child embodies all that is great and worthy in life. There is no measure of civilization so certain as our treatment of the helpless and of infants. And we know that the little baby, touching things with its fingers, meddling with those dimpled hands, reaching out in every direction toward the wonderful world, is a little picture of the whole human race in all its achievements.

All the art in the world is, after all, merely imitation. The real Beauty is about us. Perhaps the most famous of all pictures is the Sistine Madonna. Perhaps the most striking feature of this painting is the representation of the two cherubs looking out at us over the threshold of heaven. Raphael, the painter, did not imagine these children. He saw two such children looking up at the painting over a barrier, and he painted them into the picture. Hundreds of people saw those children merely as children, and perhaps feared that their fingers would mar something. The true artist, Raphael, saw in them the real Beauty, which he could only imitate on his canvas.

Justice Robitzek has done us all a service. He has brought back our thoughts from what is pretty and useful, neat and orderly, to what is beautiful, noble, and priceless, the beauty in childhood and innocence which is beyond all art.

You can never tell the difference between a house and a home until you have lived with the occupants.

The wise man does not seek the girl anxious to get married—but the girl anxious to stay married.

Most women's idea of light-housekeeping is to live at a hotel and have breakfast in bed.

Never kiss a girl who doesn't want to be kissed—if you can ever find such a girl.

If sermons would spread like scandals, the world would soon be reformed.

If you've ever told anyone's secret, how dare you tell anyone your own?