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 Philadelphia, Friday, January 17, 1919

INVERSE RATIO
 THE chief resident physician of the Philadelphia General Hospital notes the fact that there was a decided decrease in the number of alcoholic cases in the hospital last year, and gives the great demand for labor and the high wages paid as one of the reasons.
 This is probably as true as it is startling. And it may be that thirt stamps and Liberty Bonds helped a little.

Bill the bartender had better study the mysteries of the nut suds.

A SECRET PEACE CONFERENCE
 PRESIDENT WILSON and Lloyd George are the two men who represent the most strongly democratic ideals at the Peace Conference. They have tried to avoid all the usual methods of diplomatic intrigue. Their shield and their weapon is public opinion.
 The rule of secrecy proposed by Continental delegates at Paris would leave the President and the British Premier relatively powerless. All the world that is not concerned with unworthy selfish interests will support whatever measures Mr. Wilson and Mr. Lloyd George may adopt to keep the processes of the Peace Conference open to the light of day and to critical scrutiny.
 This sudden attempt to draw the veil of secrecy about the Versailles debates was not unexpected. It is a sober incident that should enable us to understand why Mr. Wilson felt it necessary to go to Europe.

Old Sack says there is neither rhyme nor reason in "trafficking" and "amending."

COSTLY AMUSEMENTS
 IMITATIONS of the proposed amending the tax on amusement tickets will be in the revenue bill will give parliament to the familiar assertion that taxpayers take their pleasures sadly. Amusement impost on popular industries. For the speculator or "agency" charge, however, seems likely to render the tax a duplicitous job. Governmental amusements will cost six dollars per month at the box-office rate.

The managers are reported greatly excited over this prospect and planning pressure on the legislators. It is not they, however, so much as the buying public which should launch a drive. The tax, if authorized, will have to be paid by the playhouse patron; but one thing which even the most drastic revenue law does not necessarily restrain is the production of a "show" that is really worth two dollars. If full value was returned for that expenditure the forty cents might be paid in a combined glow of both patriotism and art.

Old John Barleycorn gets on his knees days in looking at the map.

OYSTERS OR MOSQUITOES?
 MAN and the mosquito still battle for supremacy in some parts of South Jersey. The debates of down-state oyster-holders, who are insistent that the worst of mosquito elimination be discontinued because it has been found injurious to oysters in the creeks, is poignantly suggestive of our relative helplessness in this confused world of ours.

Had nature been frightened oysters would be born with wings. They would hunt mosquitoes. It is too late now to remedy the defects, because an oyster cannot be taught anything worth while. Some marvelous instinct, it seems, has led the oyster to live under water. It may be proved that the first of them lived in the South Jersey creeks with a full consciousness of what was to come.
 Between oysters and mosquitoes there should be no question. When the last mosquito is sent to the great beyond, and not until then, will Jersey have peace.

Whatever may be the moral condition of Philadelphia's streets there is plenty of evidence that they are physically unclean.

AN UNJUSTIFIED FRENCH PROTEST
 DISINGENUOUSNESS as well as nervousness characterizes the attitude of the French press, which is inquiring why Canada, South Africa and Australia should be accorded representation at the Peace Conference while "Tunis, Morocco, Laos and Cambodia" are denied that privilege. The reason is securely grounded in fact. The countries mentioned are not French colonies at all and are hence not comparable in status with the self-governing possessions under the British crown.

There is a Sultan in Morocco, a Bey in Tunis, kings in Laos and Cambodia, respectively. France "protects" them. Officially these nations were not ranked as independent belligerents in the war, neither can they be strictly classified as part of the French republic. Their protectorate

role is somewhat similar to that played by Zanzibar, where a British high commissioner and resident administers the government in a sultanate.
 Claim for representation by this territory would be extravagant and unreasonable. France has so many just claims for a recognition of her interests that it is folly for her to weaken her position with thin pretenses so easily exposed.

THE LEGISLATIVE STAMPEDE FOR NATIONAL PROHIBITION

Dry Landslide Is Retribution for Years of Debauch Abuses in the Liquor Business
EVERYBODY but the liquor interests knew ten years ago that prohibition had to come. The corner saloon, syndicated and subsidized by men higher up, has been in many instances an abomination and an iniquity. It has been a source of poverty. It is linked up with political prostitution. No one ever can measure the sorrow that has added out from it. More than half of the men who go to jail and the electric chair are, in the final analysis, victims of second-rate whisky.

In many quarters, among those who, like hotel owners, have legitimate interests involved with and largely dependent upon the license privilege, there has been a feeling that undue vindictiveness entered into the campaign against liquor and the liquor traffic. That is a debatable point. And in any event the final responsibility for all the loss that the liquor business has caused in the past and all the material loss that may follow upon sweeping prohibition lies with the brewers and distillers, who turned to the saloons in the headlong effort to wring the last cent of profit out of their business.

It was the cruelty and sordidness of the traffic that gave the "bone-dry" advocates their first battery. They complained against a system that first created a thirst for whisky and then determinedly capitalized that weakness. All experience gained in the industrial life of the country made it plain that reforms, and very drastic ones, had to be arranged. And yet if the men interested in the liquor business had been less blind, if they had been a shade more conscientious, they might have avoided the rigors of a "bone-dry" amendment such as was ratified in the State Legislatures yesterday.

For rigorous the "bone-dry" amendment will be. The resentment and antagonism thus expressed against the traffic in intoxicants were inspired by the shameless abuses of the whisky business in the saloons. But the sudden whirlwind of legislation unloosed in the last few days has no limits. It reaches to the dinner tables in countless orderly households. The thin wines and the weakest beers go flying into the limbo of illegal things. Innumerable persons who were never intoxicated in their lives will be forced to endure a mild sort of hardship by the enforced revision of their dinner schedules and the elimination of the relatively harmless beverages which they preferred to tea and coffee and which are, in the cases of many persons, less stimulating than those commonplace brews.

This change will not be welcomed by everybody. There is sure to be a great deal of clamor in the days immediately ahead. Yet, if the blow fell heavily, if the crash was overwhelming, there must have been a tremendous force of public sentiment behind it. The whole liquor controversy could not well have ended otherwise. The wrongs and abuses were too obvious and those who profited by them were too defiant.

Instead of behaving decently in times when an aroused public consciousness demanded reforms and restrictions in the liquor traffic, the brewing and distilling interests became the corrupters of Legislatures and the most liberal employers of lobbyists and propagandists. It appears now that they were merely piling up retribution against the days to come. Certainly the denouement was sweeping. And there can be little doubt that there will be a mixture of amazement and anger among those who must endure the consequences without having participated in any way in the abuses that made "bone-dryness" inevitable.

The fact remains that it was the men charged with the general direction of the brewing and distilling interests who did more than any one else to make national prohibition certain. And it is to these men that the comparatively few innocent sufferers will have to take their complaints.

The great question now must relate to the methods necessary for the enforcement of a measure so inclusive as the "bone-dry" amendment. In Washington there seems so far to be not even a remote conception of means by which the personal habits of 100,000,000 persons can be watched and regulated.

It is certain, of course, that there will be widespread efforts at evasion. Will private stills be common? Will the Federal Government have to employ a standing army of spies and informers? Will the lais bulge? These are questions that can be answered only in the future. It is possible that the government may find the "bone-dry" law to involve the most difficult task that has ever confronted it in times of peace. And then again, it is possible that the country may gradually fall into the new plan and forget whatever craving for intoxicants it had.

The years immediately ahead will be the hardest, of course, if there is no sudden reaction expressed through the referendum vote now being talked of in fourteen of the States whose Legislatures have voted for the amendment. For a taste for alcohol is an acquired one. If there is an interval in which there is no

beer or whisky to be had the rising generation will not miss the saloons or the hotel bars any more than they could miss the betel nut or the fried blubber that they have never tasted. The matter will simplify itself ultimately after the first period of strain among those who "like a drink."

In a general way the sudden landslide for prohibition is no accidental phenomenon. There may be some painful adjustments and some kicking over the traces and loud cries, but it is certain that the saloon as we have known it is gone for good. Among those who will be most disposed to applaud the general ratification movement there will be a wish that it might have been effected more, so to speak, soberly.

There has been instead obvious symptoms of mild panic in some of the Legislatures and a rush among State politicians to get under the white flag when it began to seem that the white flag was being carried to triumph. And the pro-Germanism of brewers' cliques, the shortage of grain when grain was short, were matters which the anti-saloon people brilliantly capitalized. Yet the principles thus involved do not relate to the right or the wrong of general prohibition. Indeed, the anti-saloon forces could have afforded to go along without this artificial ammunition. The experience of all the civilized nations since the war began and the record of confusion and accident left in the war industries of this country by neighborhood saloons, together with the black story of the liquor traffic at large, gave them a valid cause and an appeal that didn't need to be supported by appeals to the wartime emotions of the people or the Legislatures.

Just because of what has happened many a saloonkeeper will decide to quit politics and let the country hustle for itself.

THE ONLY TRANSIT SOLUTION

THE sins of traction jobbery in the past are finding the P. R. T. Company out! The refusal of the State Public Service Commission to approve the proposed lease of the city's high-speed lines to that concern arises out of the scandalous watering of the underlying companies. The other objections concerning the order of payments out of earnings and the powers of the supervisory board might be overcome. But the objection to the excessive rentals paid to the subsidaries is fundamental and cannot be met except by tearing the whole rotten fabric of the street railway organization to pieces and rebuilding from the foundation.

This attitude of the commission is not surprising after the disclosures made by the P. R. T. itself in its suit to shift the burden of Federal war taxes to the operating companies. As long ago as June 12 last, in discussing this suit, we pointed out that dividends ranging as high as 72 per cent, paid to the form of rentals, would hardly pass muster before the commission, and added:

It is the abundant water in these underlying companies which has proved the chief barrier to a solution of Philadelphia's transit problems. If the Public Service Commission takes the power to determine what is a fair rate of revenue for the P. R. T. Company to demand of the car riders, it would only be logical to assume that the commission has the power to determine what is a fair profit or dividend to pay to the underlying stockholders on the basis of actual capital invested instead of hypothetical values set by a gag of promoters who fattened off stock-jobbing deals long years ago. At any rate the idea is alluring and might be worth giving a trial in the form of an "air or subway" bill. The next attempt to invade the "sanctity" of the lease contracts will succeed.

Since the P. R. T. demanded as a prerequisite to the lease that the city conform to all these fixed charges as guaranteed by the contract of 1907, and also confirm the waiver of its rights to take over the underlying companies at actual cost under the act of 1914, it seems impossible to arrange another lease that will not force the water out of the subsidaries.

But it is possible that the owners of traction stocks will not now see the light and approach the subject in a more reasonable mood? Can they persist in a course which will not only halt development of a modern transit service in this city and hold it back a generation, but may result in their losing their present investments through financial disaster to the operating company? It is unthinkable that the transit stocks be assembled and returned to the old unit system of operation and management, yet that is the possibility facing the leased companies if the P. R. T. shall be forced to keep on paying these gouge rentals. Would it not be better to come to some compromise that would meet the approval of the Public Service Commission and still pay the stockholders a fair dividend rental on the actual cash invested?

Examination of the last annual report of the P. R. T. shows that about one-quarter of the gross passenger earnings of the company goes to pay these fixed charges. In other words, every time a rider pays a ticket for a ride, one and a quarter cents goes into the pockets of the underlying stockholders, whose companies were thus described by Miss Ames Balfour, counsel of the company, in his brief to Congress last summer:

The underlying companies have no representative boards of directors. The boards are really paper boards, elected by proxies from year to year. It is difficult to get through proxies to hold an annual meeting. The companies are really dead companies. The only interest that the stockholders have is receiving semi-annually a distribution by way of dividend of the guaranteed rentals received.

There seems to be only one solution left for the problem. The whole corporate organization of the transit system must be reshaped. Whether the stockholders like it or not, it is either that or stagnation for Philadelphia's transportation growth, and the latter alternative is not to be tolerated.

A lithe cigarette dangled in the dome of the Capitol in Washington the other day by setting fire to some trash there. The blaze was extinguished before much damage was done. Something as trifling as a cigarette sometimes does much the same thing in the dome of a Congressman.

JOHN BARLEYCORN AND HIS MANY PARTS
 His Ingenuity, His Cosmic Career and His Seventh and Twentieth Century Setbacks

EVEN a bone-dry United States will have to take second place as a temperance league. Its predecessor—doubly its numerical superior—dramatically sprang into being some 1300 years ago, when a middle-aged business man of Mecca proclaimed himself the prophet of God and started to proselytize on behalf of new social habits as well as a new religion. His cult, called Mohammedanism in his memory, forbids the consumption of all wines or other intoxicating liquors, and today some 200,000,000 of "the faithful" observe that drastic mandate. Backsliders are, of course, discoverable, but on the whole the temperance sect of Islam has been observed with singular fidelity. Arabia is socially as well as physically dry, and the great Sahara is both literally and metaphorically a desert.

In other portions of the Moslem world abstinence involves the application of considerably more moral discipline. The millions of Mohammedans in India and Java dwell under governments and among peoples not officially affiliated with blue-ribbonism. So far as the civil law is concerned, the Bombay, Benares or Batavian Moslem may drink if he chooses. But if he is true to the Koran he will refrain.
 In Persia, however, a certain tolerance of alcoholic stimulants has always characterized the members of the Sumite Mohammedan sect. That this tendency is of long standing is revealed in the graceful but bibulous quarrels of tentmaking Omar. In the days of the Rubaiyat the dry factions seemed to have lacked full coercive or persuasive powers in Ispahan. Persia's neighbors, the Turks, however, seem to be made of sterner stuff. It has been hinted by blue-ribbon zealots that the Ottoman's substantial qualities as a fighter may in part be traced to this austerity.

It cannot be said, however, that Mohammedanism, backward in many respects, even at times fanatical and cruel, has been in any sense a potent factor in the recent spread of the prohibition movement. Economic reasons have operated strongly. That they must have been powerful is evidenced by the magnitude of opposing forces sustained by the force of custom and tradition going back to the hoariest antiquity.

WINE, however, is the true veteran, not spirits. The latter, produced by distillation, were unknown as beverages until the twelfth century of the Christian era. Even today, save where people of northern races or antecedents do congregate, they are not the ruling potato. Scots, Brits, Irish, Scandinavians and Americans have brought whisky into both prominence and disfavor.
 But an amazing variety of other drinks—some of them of extremely curious composition—are to be encountered elsewhere in the "wet" communities. Drinking customs are equally odd, and occasionally they furnish snotty problems for the statisticians.

Thus France, Italy, Spain and Portugal, high up in the list of wine-growing and wine-consuming countries, do not rank in the same order of diluting wine with water is very prevalent in the first two nations named, while the latter rate among the soberest of realms for the reason that they generally prefer to sell rather than drink their heaviest wines.

In the great vats of Jerez—formerly called Xeres, whence our corruption "sherry"—is stored gallon upon gallon of that extremely "heady" dessert wine, much of which is shipped to England. The Spaniard (types with "guardado," a white brandy, admette flavored, but comparatively rarely to the intoxication point. The lighter wines of his land—Valdepenas, Manzanillo, Rioja, white and red—are his table beverages, and similar fairly innocuous concoctions are quaffed in Portugal, whence most of the really strong native port is shipped abroad. It should be added that both the Spaniard and the Portuguese are wont to flavor their coffee with a dash of brandy. They seldom drink it "straight."

FRANCE, the greatest of wine-producing nations, has also long cultivated foreign markets. With the extinction of absinthe, the greatest peril to the nation has been eliminated. All the non-Moslem world had purchased her fermented juices of the grape, Germany notwithstanding the ascendancy of beer, greedily coveted the most expensive champagne. The wily Gaul who sold it often contented himself with imbibing the much milder and more "plebeian" variety known as "Bisquit."

Since Horace's day, and before it also, Italy has rejoiced in her Falernian—now called Falerio—has abhorred, even dreaded, spirits, and has clung to her delicate local wines—Orvieto, Lacrima Christi, Grignolino, Primitivo, Capri—whose bouquet is so evanescent in export. Chianti was, of course, her trade wine. Her dessert wine, Marsala, like Madeira in its island habitat, is usually taken in small quantities.

Portions fearfully captioned, and here grouped together for that reason alone, are vodka, pulque, sake and lava. They all suggest fervency, but only the first mentioned is really fire-water. Wartime Russia threw off its curse, but restored it under the regime of "peace" and Bolshevism. Its tragic potency is writ large in the grim annals of the enigmatic nation.

Mexico dotes on her sour-scented pulque, a decoction from the cactus plant, but the rest of the world envies her not at all. A great deal is consumed in the land of our southern neighbors, but a considerable quantity is necessary if a "kick" is desired.

Sake, the Japanese rice wine, is still milder, while lava, the South Sea Island, and especially the Fiji beverage, presents the anomaly of being at once slightly intoxicating and nonalcoholic. It is made from the roots or leaves of pepper trees. The comparative harmlessness of this drink, in which both Polynesians and Melanesians participate, is doubtless the reason why its manufacture is permitted by Britain in her Pacific Islands. Elsewhere in King George's South Sea empire there is considerable drought. The Cook Islands are altogether dry, although travelers declare that fermented orange juice is still surreptitiously obtainable. It constitutes a strange cheer cup indeed, but no sadder than others in the bewildering array of stimulants that have prevailed since time was from China to Peru.

Iceland may be excepted. That weird and isolated Danish peninsula has been bone-dry since 1908. Iceland—America—that is the prospective composition of the blue-ribbon triumvirate in a world whose ingenuity in devising alcoholic beverages has for centuries been indefatigable.



THE CHAFFING DISH

Benjamin Franklin
 (Today is Benjamin Franklin's birthday!)
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, sagacious and witty. The greatest of all who have lived in this city.
 Earnest and frugal, and very discerning. Always industrious, bent upon learning. Athlete, ambassador, editor, printer, Merchant and scientist, writer, inventor. None was more canny or shrewder of brain. None was more practical or more humane.
 None was ever wiser.
 With common sense ripe.
 Great advertiser.
 And founder of type.

TROUBLES he suffered, but he didn't dodge any:
 Born the fifteenth of a numerous progeny (Seventeen children Josiah had sired).
 A whole little font of good lower-case types:
 A fact that the census man must have admired—
 I think old Josiah might well have worn stripes.
 But that was in Boston where folks are profligate.
 He passed through a boyhood by no means pacific.
 Through most of his teens, young Benjamin lent his
 Best efforts to being his brother's apprentice.
 But Jimmy was crusty—they didn't get on.
 And one autumn morning young Benny was gone.
 He vowed he would make his sour kinsman look silly.
 And so he took ship and descended on Philly.

THE very first thought that came into his nob
 (After buying some buns) was to look for a job.
 So up from the ferry
 Our Benjamin stalked,
 And hungrily, very.
 Ate buns as he walked.
 A certain little falter.
 A whimsical lass,
 Observed the young strapper
 And thought he lacked class.
 And so, in the manner of feminine strutting,
 The superior damsel just couldn't help laughing;
 But Ben, unabashed by this good-natured chaffing,
 Although young Deborah
 Was certainly rude,
 He thought he'd ignore her,
 And cheerfully chewed.
 With the best kind of repartee later he parried her.
 For seven years afterward he went and married her.

Elegy in a Corner Saloon
 The curfew tolls the knell of parting bonze.
 The thrifty crowd winds unexcited home,
 The barkeep has an access of the blues,
 And no one has the heart to blow the foam.
 The urns of tea do not inebriate,
 Consume and optum have but sorry lure,
 Indeed henceforward what can irrigate
 The short and simple channels of the poor?
 The boast of Haig and Haig, the pomp of Schlitz,
 And all that whisky, all that beer s'er gave,
 All, all are shattered into little bits—
 What use the craving when there's naught to crave?

WELL, you all know of his varied successes,
 Electrical hobbies and his printing presses.
 See how his mind, with original oddity,
 Reached and found interest in every commodity:
 Busy with schemes to domesticate lightning.
 Inventing a stove for home warming and brightening.
 Scribbling a proverb, a joke or a sermon,
 Publishing too (what I am loth to mention
 For fear of its bringing up any dimension)
 Printing, I say, a newspaper in German—
SOCRATES.

WHEN I was still a yaw-head kid across an ancient spell,
 And had to do as I was bid or catch a halley;
 I still recall with mauldin curse the day
 I had to rise
 And kick with some foolish verse
 A terror in my eyes:
 "Beneath the Spreading Chestnut Tree—
 The Ride of Paul Revere—"
 "Upon a Stern and Rock-bound Coast"—
 And others just as sore:
 But from the list which stands account
 Where nightmares still entwine,
 The one that I recited first was "Bingen on the Rhine."
 Ach Gott! The morning I arose upon the schoolhouse stand,
 With pallid cheeks and shaking toes and tremors of the hand;
 My heart went up to meet my mouth, my longing eyes grew dim,
 My tongue was drier than a drought along Sahara's rim;
 "A soldier of the legion lay"—and then with starting tears,
 I stopped without a word to say, for I forgot
 Agiers,
 And that's why heart and soul still burn
 And cold chills soak the spine,
 Each time my morbid thoughts return to Bingen on the Rhine.
 And now against the Hun's abode with steady train along,
 The old Third Army lifts the road, two hundred thousand strong;
 As dim clouds from the eastward creep the vanguards down the plain,
 They laid their sector of the sweep that started from Lorraine.
 I don't know yet where Bingen stands upon the holy map,
 Nor yet which Allied army lands upon its waiting lap;
 But while for war and all its hell I can't say,
 I'd like to drop at least one shell in Bingen on the Rhine.
 —Lieutenant Grantland Rice,
 Third Army, A. E. F.
 Sad the fate of
 How Soon the Przemysl. In September, 1914, the name of the Galician town was on every tongue—and the tongues were having a hard time with it. Things were different then. Russia was still on the map; General Rennenkampf had captured the stronghold; the German machine had temporarily halted, and the world thrilled with anticipation. And today Przemysl's hard work to get on the front page with its story took 2000 people have been killed by the Ukrainians.

Bingen on the Rhine

What Do You Know?
 QUIZ
 1. How many years did Benjamin Franklin live?
 2. What is the longest tunnel in the world?
 3. How long was the Union for many years had two capitals each?
 4. Who is the present Emperor of Japan?
 5. How long was the day of ratification of the prohibition amendment so into effect?
 6. What is the meaning of the word laurus?
 7. What is the longest river in France?
 8. Who was "Mother Shipton"?
 9. Who said "Revenge is profitable, gratification is not"?
 10. Which syllable should be stressed in the word "gondola"?
 Answers to Yesterday's Quiz
 1. Two Presidents of the United States, George Washington and Martin Van Buren of Dutch national ancestry.
 2. Tradition prescribes ruby after the fifth wedding anniversary.
 3. The longest river within the United States (excluding Alaska) after the Mississippi, is the Arkansas.
 4. Sauer. Metaculus has just resigned chairmanship of the Democratic National Committee.
 5. The forenoon of a ship in the end of the world in the angle of the bows.
 6. The Atlas Mountains are in Morocco.
 7. Hellas is the Greek name for Greece.
 8. The annual salary of the President of the United States is \$25,000, with \$25,000 for traveling expenses.
 9. Henry Fielding, the English novelist of the eighteenth century, wrote "Tom Jones."
 10. Mohammed was born in the latter end of the sixth century A. D. He died in 632.