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WESTMINSTER, MARYLAND

The Republican Paper of Carroll County

W. L. W. SEABROOK, Editor

GUY N. FRINGER, Manager

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CARROLL COUNTY'S PROHIBITION LAW

ITS MERITS AND ITS DEFECTS

Something of a test of the merits of the Carroll county prohibition law was made, when about 2 o'clock on Sunday morninig last, eight young men were arrested by Sheriff Davis and Officer Stem, of this city, charged with bringing into the county a larger quantity of alcoholic liquor than is permitted to be done, at one time, by any individual. The young men had gone to Reisterstown by bus, in the evening, and were returning by the same method, with the liquor in bags and gripsacks. They were arrested at the edge of town and the contents of the receptacles seized. A detailed account of the matter will be found in the local columns of the Sentinel.

The proceeding seems to indicate a determined purpose to enforce the law and to make it as effective as possible, notwithstanding its defects. It has been operative now for nearly a month, and the testimony of citizens who opposed its adoption and voted against it, can now be cited to demonstrate that the Saturday nights during that period have been more orderly and free from unseemly noises, on the streets of this city, than had been the case for years before. Young men, and perhaps older ones too, who had been in the habit of whooping and yelling as they started homeward, went, since May 1st, quietly and without disturbinig the peace and comfort of citizens who desired to have their sleep unbroken. At the East End the young men, arrested on Sunday morning, broke the month's record for orderliness by making more or less disturbance, but the benefit of the prohibitive law was well established, in maintaining peace and quietness, before this unfortunate occurrence.

That is, undoubtedly one of the merits of the law, which all well disposed citizens can approve. Another is, that, notwithstanding the pessimistic predictions that it would be prejudicial to busiensss conditions, that prophecy has failed and there are evidences that point to improvement to the business conditions of the town. One merchant informs the editor of the Sentinel that his Saturday night trade had not fallen off, but, on the contrary has improved, and that several persons have purchased groceries who had never done so before. There are other evidences of improvement, especially in the personal habits of some citizens, that if it were proper to relate them, would further emphasize the merits and advantages of the law. And Westminster is not the only town in the county that is experiencing that benefit.

But the law can be made, or at least should be made, even more effective by its amendment. The circumstances of the trip of the young men, referred to, points to a serious defect in the measure. It is entirely too liberal on the wet side of its provisions. There were more than eight men in the party which visited Reisterstown on Saturday. But all of them exeept three of those arrested, kept within the law by not bringing back more than a gallon of the alcoholic fluid. But, in all conscience, the law should not allow the bringing into the county, at one time, so much as a gallon of intoxicating liquor by a single individual. To divide that quantity by four would be more consonant with the real purpose of the measure, and its friends should bestir themselves and endeavor to have the law amended in that direction by the legislature at its session the coming January. To get the real benefit of prohibition the law must be made prohibitive.

There is another point that perhaps lies beyond the pale of law, but should be under strict control by the jitney companies whose busses run out of and through the county. They should adopt a rule for the protection of their passengers and the peace of the towns through which they pass, especially at night, against carrying intoxicated individuals. If a company of young men should become uprorious and noisy on any well regulated railroad they would, if persistent in such conduct, be ejected from the cars. The jitneys should enforce a similar rule and thus co-operate with the general public in maintaining and enforcing law and order.

The Small Boy is too much in a hurry to wait a jiffy while his mother finishes a letter for him to mail, but he can sit patiently on the bank for two hours and 37 minutes encouraged by the belief that he had a nibble.

WHAT SHOULD THE END BE?

There are partizans of each of the contending nations of Europe, engaged in their great war, who favor the power, or powers, which they deem as fighting for a just cause, and who hope to see the other powers utterly crushed, without taking into consideration the world consequences to follow such a result. There are those who hope to see Germany and Austria wiped off of the map as independent nations. Others who long to see proud Albion humbled in the dust, England and France reduced to about third or fourth rate nations, and the Muscovite held within his ancient boundaries. There are few, perhaps, who do not hope to see the unspeakable Turk banished from the European soil on which he became an interloper about five centuries ago. For all who cherish hope of the overthrow of the Teutons, the English, the French or the Slav, the right thinking individual will trust that disappointment may be awaiting them. Neither of the final catastrophes thus hoped for should materialize.

Great changes, it may be admitted, are desirable, but should be realized without the dire consequences longed for by prejudiced partizans. But the world will be better for the result of the war, if the end should be, for instance, the restoration of the German States to the independency they enjoyed before Bismarck formed them into an empire; if they should be again ruled by real kings and parliaments, instead of by figure heads and by the Emperor and the Reichstag of a united Germany. If the emporer should be reduced to the kingship of Prussia, the Central German State. If Belgium should be as fully restored as that may be possible, and Germany should be made to bear the cost of that restoration. If Alsace and Lorraine should be erected into an independent State, with a president and congress, and separate state legislatures. If France were left to work out her future destiny as a republic, in her own way. If Great Britain should lose her proud standing as the Mistress of the Seas and continue a course of peace as a republic, or as a monarchy ruled in fact by the people. If Austria should restore to Italy the provinces once torn from her by force, and Italy should become a republic or a monarchy so limited that it would no longer be possible for her king to rule as an autocrat and declare war or peace at his own will. If Hungary should become an independent country, either as a modified monarchy or a republic, as was the dream of the great Hungarian patriot, Louis Kossuth, 65 years ago and later, as he spent his life in exile from his native land. If the ambition of the Muscovite to extend his domains should be curbed and the monarchy become a limited one, with a real parliament of the people. If Ancient Poland should be restored to her rights as an independent sovereignity.

If the integrity of the Scandinavian countries—Sweden, Norway and Denmark, and the Netherlands should be maintained, and the territory torn from Denmark by Prussia should be restored.

If the lines of the lesser European, or Balkan States—Roumania, Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro, Herzegovina, Albania and Greece should be guaranteed. If what is now Turkey in Europe should be created into an independent European State, and all Europe should unite in compelling the Turks in Asia to respect the rights of the Christian residents and natives of Asiatic Turkey. And, finally, if in all the countries named, the natural rights of man should be enforced and real government by the people established.

Such a consummation, of course, can hardly be hoped for; but it may be earnestly prayed for by any Christian man or woman, no matter what his or her sectarian faith and racial prejudice. And so may it come to pass.

THE BREVITY OF HUMAN LIFE

The brevity of human life was incidentally a topic referred to, a day or two ago, in a conversation between the editor of the Sentinel and a friend, when the latter stated that he was 61 years old. Forty-seven years ago, when the editor first became connected with the Sentinel, this friend was a boy of 14, and it did not seem possible that he, in what seemed to both that brief time, had become a man long past middle age. How swiftly the years had flown to each and how brief they seemed in retrospect. Each thought how long the years had seemed to stretch before him when he was young, but how short the time appears now, when he is looking backward. This is, doubtless, the experience of everyone who has reached old age, or who approaches the time "when the grasshopper becomes a burden."

Is it not wise, even in earlier life, to contemplate the certainty, if we live the years alloted as common to man, that they will seem to have been all too short for life's business and pleasure. Is it not well to turn to the lessons of Holy Scripture, which repeatedly remind us of that inevitable fact. How vivid and expressive are some of those lessons. David, the shepherd king of Israel, is quoted in First Chronicles, 29:15, as saying, "Our days on earth are but as a shadow, and there is no abiding." In Psalm 39:3, he said, "Every man at his best state, is altogether vanity;" in Psalm 90:5, 6, 9 and 10, "Our days are a sleep," they are like grass; "in the morning it groweth up and flourish; in the evening it is cut down and withereth;" in Psalm 103, Life is like grass, "as a flower of the field it flourishes," but "the wind passeth over it and it is gone, and the place thereof shall know it no more." Isaiah, 40:6, 8, has very much the same simile when he says, "The grass withereth, the flower thereof falleth." Job, 14:10, says, "Man dieth and wasteth away," and he asks, "Where is he?" In I Peter, 1:24, the simile which likens life to grass, is also employed, but perhaps the most expressive of all Scripture is that in James, 4:14, "For what is your life, it is even a vapor, which appeareth for a little time and then vanishes away."

The writer recalls visions of his boyhood when, living up in Frederick county, about four miles from the Catoctin mountain, he many times witnessed vivid illustrations of this remarkable comparison of life's brevity. Often, during misty weather, or following rain, while the clouds still obscured the sky, he has seen vapors rise at the foot of the mountain, float along and up the mountain side, until they rose above its top, and then vanish away. People of that locality still often witness this wonderful illustration of St. James' description of the brevity of human life.

It need not be actually seen to profit by its lesson. It contains a truth that, properly considered, must appeal to everyone's consciousness, and prompt to learning by the truth it inculcates. Is it not wise, in the mad rush of life at this day, to stop awhile and contemplate its end, and how soon that must come to all, and doubtless to many who will not need to look far backward to realize the brevity of human existence.

ITALY ENTERS THE WAR

WHAT EFFECT, IF ANY, WILL THAT HAVE UPON AMERICAN INTERESTS?

After months of uncertainty as to the ultimate action of Italy, in relation to the great European war, she has finally cast in her lot with the Allies. A formal declaration of war upon Austria was issued on Saturday, and active hostilities are in progress, not only with Austria but with Germany, as the latter promptly came to the aid of her Austrian associate, by declaring war upon Italy. There was, in fact, no reason to doubt that the Teutons would stand together in this new emergency. Germany, especially, has met this new menace with an apparently undaunted courage that must challenge the admiration even of her enemies. Whether the German people are at all as confident of ultimate victory as they declare, however, is not by any means as certain as is their stern determination to continue the struggle to the bitter end. They have only been able to defend themselves against their mighty enemies during the nine months since they began the conflict. How will they be able to meet the forces overwhelmingly enlarged by the four millions of Italians, whom it is said can be raised by that government, to say nothing of the curtailment of the supplies they have been able to obtain through Italy as a neutral country? This, to be sure, is only speculation, but has, at least, some semblance of realty.

This is a question which, of course, directly concerns the nations at war, but which it is generally supposed, is considered of great importance to our own country; and our people are asking in what manner we are to be affected by it. Will it have any influence in deciding Germany what answer to make to Secretary Bryan's note demanding the abondonment of submarine warfare at the peril of peaceful travelers? It can hardly be doubted that it will make Germany more determined to continue that method of meeting Great Britain's effort to starve her into submission. She may agree, if the American government will place an embargo upon the shipment of contraband of war on passenger vessels, to refrain from attacks upon them, but that she will cease her undersea warfare on British merchant ships is hardly a possibility. And that, it must be said, should be no concern of the United States. She may well tell us, in regard to it, that we had better mind our own business.

Another question will ultimately arise, in which the American Administration is itching to take a hand. The war cannot last forever. It may still be greatly prolonged, but must come to an end at last. That may be caused by the triumph of either of the contending belligerents, or by the utter exhaustion of all of them. In either event this country will be prone to offer its services as an arbiter and peace maker. It is said that the Administration is hopeful that the Pan-American Financial Conference, in which, besides the United States, there are eighteen South and Central American countries engaged, and which is now meeting in Washington, may exert some influence in favor of peace. Of course no definite action in that direction is contemplated. It is only hoped that the spectacle of these nineteen American nations, meeting together in comity for their mutual benefit, may have a moral effect upon the rest of the wrrld.

That is for the present. But it is plainly intimated that the time will come when the United States will take a leading part in adjusting such differences as may arise when the warring nations shall be looking for a basis upon which to rest a just, righteous and lasting peace. That the present Administration has that ambition is too apparent to be questioned. It has already ventured to offer its good offices between the belligerents, and has been politely snubbed for officiousness.

It may be ungracious to say it, but this may prove a case, also, when this country should mind its own business, unless the warring nations shall, in unison, call upon it. It cannot be denied that it is not regarded, by Germany, as a strictly neutral and friendly power, and that country may never become willing to have it become an arbitetr in her future destiny. Rather, she may repel such interference, even in her own behalf, if she shall be finally worsted in the conflict.

It is not time yet, at least, for this country, or the United Americas, to be posing as a peace maker. It may be felt, on the Eastern Hemisphere, that the Western should refrain from intermeddling in its affairs. At any rate there is prevalont among the warring nations, whether justly or not, an opinion that the American people are not neutral, but that most of them are hostile in sentiment to Germany. And, unfortunately there is valid ground for that opinion.

The plain duty of the United States, therefore, is to keep its hands off and out of this war business, except as it shall become its duty to protect its own citizens if their rights shall be infringed by any of the belligerents.

It is impossible to say, with any definiteness, what the entrance of Italy into the conflict may mean to the United States. It may be much or it may be nothing. Most probably its effect upon our interests will be of a comparatively negligible quantity.

INTERESTING AND ENLIGHTENING ARTICLES

Readers of the Sentinel are advised to peruse the articles it is publishing from the Republican Congressional Committee and the Republican Publicity Association. They will find in these articles abundant evidence of the inefficiency of the late Democratic Congress to legislate intelligently upon many of the questions by which this country has been confronted during the more than two years of Democratic Administration. They will have pointed out to them the lack of ability displayed by the committees which formulated the measures passed, and of the Democrats in the Senate and House, who passed them. They will see how blunder after blunder was committed by these legislators, with their eyes wide open, in considering and passing upon most of these measures, after they had gone through consideration and discussion and had run the gauntlet of the scholarly supervision of the President and had received the sanction of his signature, if they had not been originally the product of his brain. They will find the tariff, income tax and stamp tax laws, particularly, sprinkled all over with blunders which would have made a school boy blush with shame over such inefficiency. They will find differences of interpretation of provisions of these acts, by different public officials, collectors of customs, collectors of internal revenue and other officials, whose duties call for knowledge upon such subjects. They will find even judges of courts at sea in their efforts to interpret the meaning of words and phrases employed in these laws, and other officials who, by their own judgment have undertaken to unravel and apply the laws, especially in regard to the stamp tax, differing materially, so that documents have been stamped in some localities, while in others they have passed through without having the stamps supposed to be required to be affixed.

In this campaign of instruction on public questions, by the Congressional Committee and the Publicity Association, it has been shown that in the stamp tax law alone twenty-five provisions are found which have required, or will require, interpretation by the courts, and some of which no court or anybody else can properly interpret. They must all be corrected by further legislation.

This blundering in legislation is known to many Democrats and some of them are constrained to sadly admit that their party is not equal to running this government intelligently and successfully.

But it is not alone in blundering of this sort that the Democratic Administration and Congress have failed in performing the best service for American interests. They have brought disaster upon business and manufacturing enterprises and today the country is only prevented from a downright collapse of such interests, by its immense foreign trade in war materials.

The Sentinel will continue to publish, from time to time, articles prepared by the two organizations named and which will be found full of interesting and enlightening information. It advises its patrons to read and study them carefully.

It is not known just how effective the militia officers would be in case of war, but anyway they can cook a dandy welch rabbit.

The college boys are wearing their trousers turned up again this summer, but probably not because it saves Dad money by making the clothes last longer.

From the National Republican Congressional Committee (No. 6)

DEMOCRATIC TARIFF LAW BLUNDERING

Washington, D. C., May 25.—A typical example of inexcusable blundering by Congress in the enactment of a statute has been argued recently before the Court of Customs Appeals. The court is asked to interpret the meaning of paragraph 408 of the Underwood tariff act, the first important law of the present administration.

The paragraph provides free entry for "waste" of any of the articles therein described "SUITABLE" for the manufacture of paper. Careless use of the word "suitable" in drafting the law plunged it into uncertainty, for it admits a wide latitude of construction. Will free entry be given to anything that MIGHT be used in paper making; or must waste be used ONLY in paper making in order to enter free of duty?

Already two opposing constructions have been placed upon the statute, one by customs officials who imposed a tax, another by the Board of U. S. General Appraisers who allowed free entry. Now the higher court is appealed to for a third opinion as to the intent of the law makers.

The blunder is more notable because the language of former tariff acts was an ample guide, clearly emphasizing the need for unequivocal diction. The act of 1897 provided free entry for waste "FIT ONLY" to be converted into paper. The corresponding paragraph in the 1909 act extended free entry to waste "USED CHIEFLY" for paper making.

With these provisions in the old law, it seems as though intelligent revision would have been simplicity itself. But with their fatal gift of blundering the Democrats seized upon and inserted "SUITABLE" in the law, the one word that neither customs officials, lawyers nor business men affected could understand, and which rendered imperative the litigation now in the courts before the statute can be finally enforced.

THE POWER OF COLD FACTS

A remarkable instance of the power of the newspaper press has just been given in England. A complete readjustment of the cabinet governing that country has just been forced, and it is said to have been due to a dispatch from a correspondent of the London Times. This dispatch dwelt on the fact that the army was being supplied with too much shrapnel and too few high explosive shells.

If the downfall of the English cabinet is thus truly explained, it is an instance of the power of careful and accurate statements of fact, both in newspaper work and in political campaigning. There are too many newspaper men in this country who are mere armchair critics. They can write brilliant and slashing articles, but they lack a foundation of solid investigation.

The political stump is full of on hand statesmen, who can get you up a slam-whanging speech in a half hour. It exposes the absurdity and futility of opponents, and is clever, witty and sets the galleries to cheering. But when the thoughtful citizen gets home he asks himself, What more do I know about my government? To which he must answer, Nothing.

Probably one reason why political rallies are not well attended is that there is too much arm swinging and too little real information.

American newspapers are all the time presenting carefully prepared statements of fact, that are just as influential in a more limited field as has been the dispatch that is said to have broken the English cabinet. But the national temperament interposes obstacles in the way of the most accurate work. The public demands its news quick. It would rather take an unverified rumor today than to have an editor spend 24 hours getting more accurate information and come in late with his story. The public blames the newspaper press for inaccuracy, and then forces the newspapers to compete under conditions that make accuracy difficult if not impossible.

ARE THE VETERANS FORGOTTEN

It has long been remarked that the exercises of the national Memorial Day, May 30, do not attract anything like the interest that used to be manifested in them. Twenty years ago prominent citizens all through the Northern states used to attend these functions in large numbers. There was able oratory and the enthusiasm of a big crowd. It is a matter of keen regret to the remnant of veterans left today, that it is so different to get half as good a turn-out today.

Various expedients have been tried to make these observances more popular. They have been held Sundays and in the evening, instead of on the holiday. Some such change may draw a crowd for once. But the American people are eager for a holiday. They flock to the ball grounds and the automobile road. The eloquence of patriotic speakers resounds in more or less empty halls.

All of which leaves in the mind of the Civil war veteran the feeling that he is merely a forgotten relic of a day that has gone by. While he has been trying to keep alive the memories of the heroisms of the war, the world current seems to have slipped by and left him stranded in a forgotten past.

Of course it would be better if the American people would give a more respectful attention to serious observances. Still one must take them as they are. They may leave the veterans alone with their memories at the burial ground. But that the old soldiers are not forgotten is suggested by the fact that this ountry has always maintained a pension system of a generosity that has been unheard of in other lands.

You can get out a hundred people to agitate for some future benefit, where you could not get ten to celebrate an event of history. That is our American temperament. It is irreverent to the past. But it is a part of the restless energy of our land, always forging ahead, giving perhaps too little thought to the deeds and struggles of the past.

The farmers admit that they may get smashed up by automobiles when they drive through the country at night without carrying lanterns, but then their grandfathers never felt lights were necessary.

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